

CO-TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES: THE  
RELATIONSHIP AMONG SELF-EFFICACY, COLLABORATION, AND  
REFLECTION

by  
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## Abstract

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between the special education and English language learner (ELL) co-teaching pairing and teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. A second purpose of the study was to develop a better understanding of how collaboration and reflection influence teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. A special education teacher and an ELL teacher co-taught a high school English Language Arts class of ELLs with disabilities over the course of one school year. During a 12-week intervention, the researcher met with the participants six times to facilitate reflection and support the collaborative practices of the co-teaching pairing. The participants completed a pre- and post-survey and participated in individual interviews after the completion of the intervention. Additional data sources included a researcher's journal, biweekly reports, and reflection sheets. The findings indicate that collaboration and reflection play a critical role in the development of teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. Additionally, the participants had markedly positive perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the new co-teaching pairing. This study expands upon current research on co-teaching and teacher self-efficacy can inform future service delivery models for ELLs with disabilities. Limitations and implications for practice and research will be discussed.

*Keywords:* English language learners, disabilities, collaboration, co-teaching, reflection, teacher self-efficacy, coaching

Dissertation Co-Advisers: Dr. Sherri K. Prosser and Dr. Yolanda Abel



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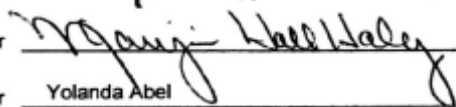
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## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my supportive family who are always there to support me and challenge me to be the best version of myself:

To my mother and father, who always encourage me to learn and challenge myself

To my husband, who supports me unconditionally and has helped me to overcome any obstacle

And finally, to my son, Bryce Eugene Wildasin, may you always value education, innovation, and hard work.

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I would especially like to thank my adviser, Dr. Prosser. Her guidance and support allowed me to think more critically than I thought I could and develop lasting understandings. Her critical eye for detail and knowledge of qualitative analysis was essential to this study as well as my future endeavors. I have learned so much from Dr. Prosser through this process that I will carry through my professional career.

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## Executive Summary

This study focuses on supporting teachers working with English language learners (ELLs) with disabilities. At the researcher's urging, the school created a new co-teaching pairing in which a special education teacher and an ELL teacher co-taught a class of ELLs with disabilities. The researcher coached the teaching pair on best practices of co-teaching and facilitated their reflection. This mixed methods study investigated the relationship between collaboration, reflection, and teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities.

### **Problem of Practice**

ELLs with disabilities perform below their non-identified peers (Newman et al., 2011). According to the Nation's Report Card data in 2013, eighth-grade students with disabilities had an average reading scale score that was 40 points below their non-identified peers (U.S. Department of Education). More than three fourths of students who require special education services in the United States scored below the overall mean achievement level in all tested subject areas (Feng & Sass, 2013). ELLs showed an even greater discrepancy, averaging reading scale scores that were 45 points below their non-identified peers (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). The data showed that 97% of ELL students and 91% of students needing special education support performed below the score needed for proficient status in reading (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). The most common factors associated with the low achievement of ELLs with disabilities are new language development and communication (Swanson, Oroscon, & Lussier, 2012), processing deficits (Clahsen, Balkhair, Schutter, & Cunnings, 2013), cultural differences (García & Tyler, 2010), assessments (Abedi, 2014), and teacher skills and credentials (Trainor, 2010).

## **Theoretical Framework**

The interconnected model of professional growth provides a framework for this study and a visualization for how teacher change occurs (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). This model focuses on the reflection and enactment processes within the four domains and builds on Guskey's (1986) model of teacher change. The pedagogy of each teacher is at the center of this model. The interconnected model of professional growth accounts for teacher learning and growth through a consistent and cyclical process that is unique and situated within an individual teacher's understanding (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002).

The four domains within the interconnected model of professional growth are the personal domain, the domain of consequence, the domain of practice, and the external domain. The personal domain focuses on a teacher's personal knowledge, beliefs, and attitude toward a given topic and aligns with the concept of teacher self-efficacy as explained by Bandura (1993). The domain of consequence refers to the outcomes that the teacher experiences and the domain of practice refers to the teacher's willingness and/or experience with trying new methods. The external domain refers to the varying sources where teachers can get information and support. Reflection and enactment in this model connect the various domains to facilitate change (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). There is not a singular, linear path that one must take to create change, and thus it is individualized to the teacher and the experience (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002).

## **Synthesis of Relevant Research Literature**

This section reviews the research relevant to the study: teacher self-efficacy, collaboration, and reflection.

### **Teacher Self-Efficacy**

Teacher self-efficacy can be defined as a judgement on one's skills or ability to impact

desired outcomes (Leyser, Zeiger, & Romi, 2011). A teacher's sense of self-efficacy has been linked to many different educational outcomes such as student achievement, motivation, and organization (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Teacher behaviors are related to their self-efficacy, and thus have an influence on specific student outcomes (Jerald, 2007). Teachers with a strong sense of self-efficacy tend to be more resilient, more willing to try new strategies within the classroom, and exhibit greater levels of planning and organization (Jerald, 2007). Teacher self-efficacy is a complex concept that can have an impact on many different educational outcomes both directly and indirectly.

Because teacher self-efficacy impacts many different educational outcomes, determining how to support teacher self-efficacy is of critical importance. Bandura (1977) identified experience or performance accomplishments as an important factor in determining a teacher's self-efficacy. Hoy (2000) built on Bandura's (1977) work and described two major factors that shape teacher self-efficacy: vicarious experiences and social persuasion. Hoy (2002) referred to vicarious experience as learning that takes place through the observations and experiences with others. Social persuasion refers to changes that occur as a result of the actions of one's peers (Hoy, 2000). These findings align with the personal domain, the domain of practice, and the external domain discussed within the interconnected model for professional growth.

Because of the many influences that teacher self-efficacy can have on student learning outcomes, professional development has been designed to support teacher self-efficacy and facilitate teachers change. Chu and García (2014) found that effective professional development had a positive effect on teacher self-efficacy when working with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

## **Collaboration**

Collaboration impacts teacher self-efficacy (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010) and when teachers collaborate with one another to develop classroom activities and lessons, both teachers and students benefit (Puchner & Taylor, 2006). When collaboration between teachers occurs, each teacher is more likely to change behaviors and try new practices than a teacher who is working in isolation (York-Barr, Ghore, & Sommers, 2007). For example, when teachers collaborate to complete a lesson on a given topic they can discuss possible activities and ways to support wide ranges of students. In a case study around collaboration within the lesson study process, teachers found that they were able to consider larger variety of structures and activities to enhance student learning (Puchner & Taylor, 2006). Teacher self-efficacy also emerged as a variable that was linked to collaboration in this study (Puchner & Taylor, 2006). The teacher participants indicated that collaboration with one another had a positive impact on their self-efficacy beliefs surrounding lesson engagement and incorporation of critical and creative thinking skills.

## **Reflection**

Reflection is considered a lever for change (Luttenberg, Meijer, & Oolbekkink-Marchand, 2017). Reflection can be defined as a process that builds meanings and a systematic way of thinking that moves a learner from one experience to the next while fostering a deeper understanding through the interactions with others (Kayapinar, 2016). A study completed by Cuesta, Azcarate, and Cardenoso (2016) showed that reflection through collaboration with other teachers had a positive influence on changes in teacher practices, ideas, and attitudes. Reflection facilitates continuous learning, and is especially important for ELL teachers due to the wide range of needs of this population (Kayapinar, 2013). Teachers that work with students with ELL

needs are required to meet the needs of students from culturally, emotionally, and educationally diverse backgrounds (Reis-Jorge, 2007). Kayapinar (2016) conducted a study specifically focusing on how reflection influenced the self-efficacy of ELL teachers. Kayapinar (2016) utilized the reflective practitioner development model to facilitate reflection with the participants and utilized the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) to measure the self-efficacy of the participants before and after the intervention. The study showed a statistically significant increase ( $p = .007$ ) from the pre- to post-survey.

### **Research Purpose and Objective**

The purpose of this study is to investigate role that collaboration and reflection have on teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. This study also investigated the relationship between the special education and ELL co-teaching pairing and teacher perceptions when working with ELLs with disabilities. This study attempts to expand upon current research on co-teaching and to consider a new co-teaching pairing to address the needs of the growing population of ELLs with disabilities.

### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does collaboration within a new co-teaching pairing influence teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities?
2. How does reflection within a new co-teaching pairing influence teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities?
3. What are the ELL teacher's and special education teacher's perceptions of the efficacy of the new co-teaching pairing?
4. How has the study implementation adhered to or differed from the proposed

implementation procedures?

### **Research Design**

This study used an explanatory mixed methods research design (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The quantitative data in this study were collected using a pre- and post-survey. The survey results served as a guide for the teacher interviews. The qualitative data were collected using a single case design (Yin, 1993). The unit of analysis in this case study was the co-teaching pair. A case study was chosen because of the complex nature of co-teaching and the many variables associated with a co-teaching relationship (Magiera, Smith, Zigmond, & Gebauer 2005). The quantitative data in this study were collected using a pre- and post-survey. The survey results served as a guide for establishing questions for the teacher interviews.

### **Intervention**

The intervention took place over a 12-week time period. A special education teacher and an ELL teacher co-taught a middle school English Language Arts class of ELLs with disabilities. Every other week during the intervention, the researcher met with the pair to facilitate reflections and support the pair's co-teaching and collaboration through discussion and providing information. Each of the six meetings lasted at least 45 minutes. To further support the pair's reflection, the researcher also facilitated a video reflection with the participants. The participants filmed a lesson of their choice and the researcher met with them after school to view the video and facilitate the specific reflection.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The quantitative data used in this study were pre- and post-survey to measure teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. An adapted version of the Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale was used as the survey for this study (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk



Hoy, 2001). Due to the small sample size of this study, the survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The research reviewed changes in specific answers from the pre- and post-survey and identified changes in the mean scores for each participant.

The qualitative data used within this study were (a) the interview, (b) biweekly reports, (c) interviews, (d) researcher's journal, and (e) reflection sheets. The qualitative data were analyzed using conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The researcher defined codes and labels during the data analysis phase and developed larger categories or themes based on the connections presented within the data.

### **Findings**

The quantitative data showed an overall increase in teacher self-efficacy mean scores from the pre- and post-survey results. The qualitative findings indicate that collaboration and reflection play a critical role in the development of teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. Collaboration allowed the participants to enhance their planning, and thus the perceived instruction provided to ELLs with disabilities. Collaboration also allowed the pair to feel more comfortable taking risks and developing strong relationships. The participants viewed reflection as an essential component of their teaching relationship. The pair utilized reflection to gain a deeper understanding of what their students knew and how they were able to improve instruction to meet the needs of ELLs with disabilities. The participants in this study also explained how their co-teaching partnership enabled them to collaborate and reflect easily and more specifically than collaboration with individuals outside of the classroom. The ELLs with disabilities in the participants' class were a clear focus for the participants throughout the intervention, and the participants reported major increases in student outcomes by the end of the intervention.



## Chapter 1

### **English Language Learners with Disabilities**

There are 6,464,096 students in the United States that receive special education services, meaning that 13% of students require special education support (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Special education support can be defined as “specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent(s), to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability” (Regulations Governing Special Education Programs, 2010, p.10). Students who require special education must go through the eligibility process to determine if the child has a disability that impacts academic performance. According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004), to receive special education services, a student must have at least one of the disability categories defined by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) and as a result of the disability, requires special education support.

An additional 4,460,956 students are considered English language learners (ELL), meaning that 9.3% of the students in the United States receive ELL services (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). ELLs can be defined as students whose primary language is a language other than English (Kuti, 2011). The term ELL is also used synonymously with the terms English learner, as presented in the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015), and limited English proficiency student. States differ on the levels of services that ELLs are eligible for and the ways in which this eligibility is assessed (Kuti, 2011). Virginia, for example, assesses English proficiency levels by using the WIDA ACCESS assessments. The WIDA ACCESS evaluates a student’s mastery of English reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. WIDA levels 1-5 are eligible for ELL services in Virginia and levels 6a-6d are monitored for continued progress (Virginia Department of Education, 2016).

The number of ELLs has consistently increased by about 10% each year (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Over 5.5 million students also have a native language other than English. Students requiring special education and/or ELL services account for 22.3% of the student population. Either group of students may have factors that inhibit their academic success, but student with both designations require specific supports to make appropriate progress (Koerth, 2016). ELLs with disabilities account for 38% of students with special education needs (Paneque & Barbetta, 2006).

ELLs with disabilities are students who require both special education and ELL support. ELLs with disabilities are often placed in classrooms that only address on area of need (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). ELLs with disabilities present unique challenges especially because the impact that a disability has on the language acquisition process is still largely unknown (Paneque & Barbetta, 2006). This population requires unique supports to make progress within the general education curriculum.

Students with both special education and ELL needs have many factors that contribute to their lower achievement. Many ELLs with disabilities did not participate in high-stakes testing until the passing of No Child Left Behind Act (2001), therefore, the standardized achievement data for ELLs with disabilities are limited (Guzman-Orth, Laitusis, Thurlow, & Christensen, 2016). As a result, policymakers differ on the criteria for identifying students who require ELL services, as well as the criteria for continuation of services (Abedi, 2004). For example, some school systems have a comprehensive assessment to determine services, while other systems rely on teacher diagnostic findings (Abedi, 2004). The Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) requires states to assess the progress of ELLs, yet does not define the type of assessment required. Many school districts rely on the student's family to report if other languages are spoken while some

districts rely on the student's teacher to report. Once a student is identified as speaking another language at home, assessments are provided to determine the student's English proficiency. To determine when a student is eligible to no longer require ELL services, Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) requires states to use a measure of reading, writing, and speaking skill. Although this is more specific than the regulations on monitoring the progress of ELLs, there is no specific designation of what constitutes English proficiency.

### **Problem of Practice**

ELLs with disabilities perform below their non-identified peers (Newman et al., 2011). According to the Nation's Report Card data in 2013, eighth-grade students with disabilities had an average reading scale score that was 40 points below their non-identified peers (U.S. Department of Education). More than three fourths of students who require special education services in the United States scored below the overall mean achievement level in all tested subject areas (Feng & Sass, 2013). ELLs showed an even greater discrepancy, averaging reading scale scores that were 45 points below their non-identified peers (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). The data showed that 97% of ELL students and 91% of students needing special education support performed below the score needed for proficient status in reading (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). The most common factors associated with the low achievement of ELLs with disabilities are new language development and communication (Swanson et al., 2012), processing deficits (Clahsen et al., 2013), cultural differences (García & Tyler, 2010), assessments (Abedi, 2014), and teacher skills and credentials (Trainor, 2010).

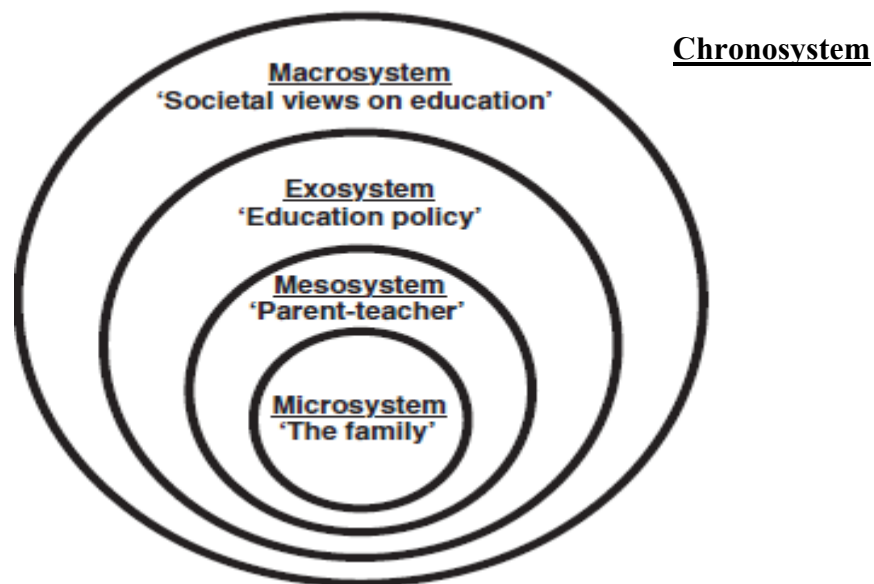
### **Theoretical Framework**

It is important to consider ecological systems theory when evaluating the achievement of ELLs with disabilities. One can use the ecological systems theory to focus on the crucial role that

environments and the individuals within those environments play in a specific individual's development.

### **Nested Ecological Systems Theory**

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological system consists of five different systems: (a) the microsystem; (b) the mesosystem; (c) exosystem; (d) macrosystem; and (e) chronosystem. Each of these systems is nested within the next, with the student being the major focus at the center of this model. Bronfenbrenner's traditional model is often compared to a set of Russian dolls and is depicted by Figure 1.



*Figure 1.* Nested model of ecological systems. Each level is situated within the next and centered on a focal student. The chronosystem is outside of the figure because this system represents that natural changes that occur over time. Adapted from “The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design,” by U. Bronfenbrenner, 1979. Copyright 1976 by Harvard Press.

Another important component of this model is Bronfenbrenner's (1979) definition of setting.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) defines setting as a “place where people can readily engage in face-to face interaction” (p. 22). This definition of setting is important to consider when understanding the various systems and other models of ecological system theory.

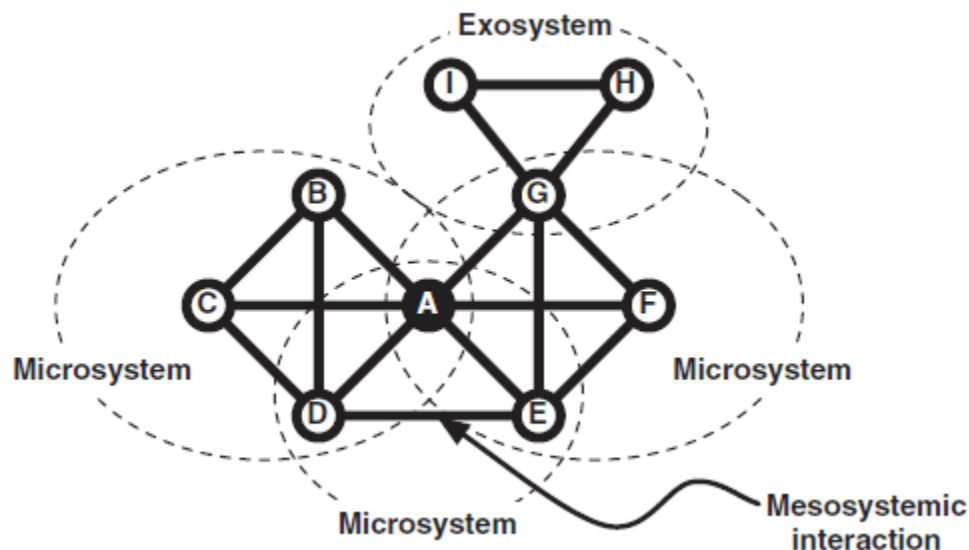
The microsystem is the lowest level within the nested systems. Within this level, the student or focal individual has a direct role. The focal individual interacts with those around him or her through direct social interactions. A boy playing with a sibling is an example of an interaction within the microsystem. The mesosystem is characterized by the interactions between the different settings where the focal student interacts. For example, a parent meeting with a student's teacher would occur in the mesosystem. Both individuals interact directly with the student, yet the specific meeting does not directly involve the student.

The exosystem focuses on factors that are indirectly related to the student. A school policy is an example of a factor within this system. The macrosystem includes cultural ideologies and beliefs that impact the focal student. For example, beliefs around gender equalities could impact the focal student's access or beliefs surrounding education and learning. The chronosystem was also added to this model to reflect the historical perspective and change that time can bring. These different systems provide a foundation for understanding the various factors and relationships that impact student learning and development. The microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem influence a particular child's development and learning in many ways, and are often studied to identify interventions or predictors for student outcomes that go beyond the individual student.

### **Networked Ecological Systems Theory**

Neal and Neal (2013) build on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Simmel's (1955) principles of intersecting social circles and developed a networked approach to ecological contexts. Neal and Neal focus on the different social interactions between various systems to determine how systems interact. In the nested ecological systems theory, setting is still a fundamental component and is defined as a "set of people engaged in social interactions, which

necessarily occurs in, and is likely affected by the features of, a place” (p. 727). Setting refers to the location and the various people interacting within the given location, which highlights the patterns of social interaction and the role that these patterns play in the understanding of a given system. An example of a networked model of ecological systems can be seen in Figure 2.



*Figure 2.* Example of a networked model of ecological systems. Letter A represents the focal student and the solid lines indicate direct interactions among various people. A group of people interacting together can be described as a setting and is shown with the dashed circles. In this example, each letter represents an individual. Letters B and C represent siblings of the focal student and letter D represents the parent, making up the student’s home setting microsystem. The other microsystem represents the student’s school setting. Letter E represents the student’s teacher, letter F represents a classmate, and letter G represents a student’s administrator. Letter I and H represents school board members or other administrators that the student does not directly interact with. Reprinted with permission from “Nested or networked? Future Directions for Ecological Systems Theory” by J. W. Neal and Z. P. Neal, 2013, *Social Development*, 22, p. 728 Copyright 2013 by Wiley-Blackwell.

According to Neal and Neal (2013), the ecological environment can be viewed as overlapping systems that are directly or indirectly connected by various social interactions. The microsystem includes various groups of people who interact directly with the focal individual. A focal student can have many different microsystems. The interactions of the various participants between different microsystems is a mesosystemic interaction (Neal & Neal, 2013). The



mesosystem can be classified by the social interaction between participants in different microsystems. The focal student is not directly involved in mesosystem, rather it is an interaction between two individuals from the focal student's microsystems. The exosystem involves a setting or social interaction between individuals that directly or indirectly interacts with the focal individual; the participants within the exosystem can interact with a participant within one of the focal individual's microsystems, yet the interactions within this setting do not directly involve the focal student. The focal student, however, can be directly or indirectly impacted by these interactions. For example, a student's teacher may interact with a department chair who the student has no contact with, however the interactions between the teacher and department chair impacts the instruction provided to the focal student. In this model, the macrosystem is a set of social patterns or rules that impact the relationships and formation of the ecological systems. The chronosystem refers to the changes in social interactions and relationships over time and the impact that these changes have on the focal individual both directly and indirectly. Cultural ideology and change based on time are key in the formation and termination of all social settings, and thus embedded throughout this model.

This ecological systems model was chosen as the framework for the current study because there are various systems impacting the achievement of ELLs with disabilities. ELLs with disabilities are part of at least three different microsystems: special education services, ELL services, and family. The various networked systems of ELLs with disabilities inform the language acquisition process, service delivery models provided, the parental involvement, teacher quality and assessment practices. Learning about how the different microsystems interact with one another will allow for a deeper understanding of the achievement of ELLs with disabilities and the contributing factors.

## **Review of the Literature**

This section reviews the literature to gain a deeper understanding of the various factors that contribute to the low achievement of ELLs with disabilities. The networked ecological systems theory (Neal & Neal, 2013) serves to frame the literature review.

### **Language Acquisition**

Language acquisition is a complex development that can be defined as the process one takes to acquire a new language after the bulk of the first language has already been established (Unsworth, 2007). The language acquisition process has many obstacles and variables that can impact the speed of mastery (Unsworth, 2007). Thus, the amount of time one takes to acquire a new language is based on the individual and the various microsystems that they interact with (Cummins, 1981). Language and how ELLs with disabilities process language is a critical factor in the achievement of ELLs with disabilities (Blanchett, Klingner, & Harry, 2009). How language is acquired by both ELLs and ELLs with disabilities needs to be better understood to sufficiently analyze and assess what impact language acquisition has on achievement (Klingner, Artiles, & Barletta, 2006).

**ELLs and language acquisition.** Students that are non-native speakers perform below their peers whose native language is the language of instruction (Azzolini, Schnell, & Palmer, 2012). The term non-native speaker refers to any person whose native language is different than the language used in instruction. This includes ELLs, as described previously, and people that have shown proficiency in the new language. Students whose native language is linguistically similar to the language of instruction, or the second language, acquire the new language more quickly than their peers who do not have linguistically similar languages (Magno, 2010). The language of the microsystems in which the students interact impact the language acquisition

process. For example, Spanish and Italian have similar words, syntax, and structure. Spanish and Chinese, on the other hand, do not have similar sounding words and are structurally very different. Thus, a student with a family microsystem that speaks Spanish would be more likely to become proficient in Italian more quickly than Chinese. When word order and the historical affinity, or origin, of a student's first language is similar to that of the second language, the student can achieve higher levels of proficiency more quickly (Magno, 2010).

The language spoken at home also impacts the speed at which an individual becomes proficient in a second language (Azzolini et al., 2012). For example, if Spanish is spoken at home, then the only exposure students get to English is in the classroom. Thus, students that get more time and exposure to authentic tasks in a new language acquire the new language at a faster pace (Azzolini et al., 2012). For example, if a student has a desire to communicate with his or her peers, the student will more actively engage with the new language. These examples show how the microsystems interactions between the focal student and the students family as well as the interactions between the student and peers impacts language acquisition for ELLs.

ELLs also require more time to complete tasks that involve reading (Tode, 2012). Students with ELL needs specifically have difficulty understanding sentences with different syntax patterns than the syntax of their native language (Lim & Christianson, 2013), which slows down comprehension. Reading goals also influence one's reading speed (Lim & Christianson, 2013). The influence that goals of reading have on a reading speed highlights the microsystemic interactions that students have within school. For example, if the goal of a task is to translate a sentence, more time is required (Lim & Christianson, 2013). This is important to note because ELLs require more time to process and comprehend a given passage.

Words that are morphologically complex require ELLs approximately twice as long as their peers that do not have ELL needs (Clahsen et al., 2013). It is also important to consider how variations in language structure impact a student's language acquisition speed. For example, students with Spanish as their native language may struggle with the "th" sound because it is not a phoneme in Spanish.

A student's generational status (i.e., how many generations a student has been in the new country) is an integral factor in the student's academic achievement (Azzolini et al., 2012). Students that are second or third generation tend to do better than students that are first generation and students that are second or third generation perform below their native born peers (Azzolini et al., 2012). The generational status of a student and the influence on achievement also demonstrates how the chronosystem impacts ELLs and the language acquisition process. A student's generational status is important to consider when evaluating the low achievement of ELLs with disabilities because it points to language acquisition as being a major factor in understanding the discrepancy of achievement.

Difficulties with language acquisition and processing greatly influence a student's ability to read, which is especially important when considering achievement. Teachers move away from teaching students to read to expecting students to be able to read-to-learn as early as third grade. Even students who are considered proficient in a second language struggle with higher order reading skills, such as reading comprehension (Swanson, Orosco, Lussier, Gerber, & Guzman-Orth, 2011). On tasks that require students to use higher order reading skills, students who are ELLs perform below their peers that are not ELLs (Linan-Thompson, Vaughn, Hickman-Davis, & Kouzekanani, 2003).

**ELLs with disabilities and language acquisition.** The gap in achievement widens when considering students who require special education services in addition to ELL needs (Huang, Clarke, Milczarski, & Raby, 2011; Linan-Thompson et al., 2003). ELLs with disabilities receive support within the school from two different microsystems: special education and ELL services. ELLs with disabilities performed significantly lower on reading tasks than students with disabilities that were not ELLs (Verhoeven & Vermeer, 2006). General reading and literacy skills are present in all core content areas and could, therefore, prevent ELLs from accessing needed information or resources. ELLs with disabilities require more time and instruction to show mastery of concepts than their peers with only one area of need (Benner, Ralston, & Feurborn, 2012). ELLs with disabilities require significant amounts of time to process information (Benner et al., 2012).

Traditional research-based reading interventions have been less effective with students who require both special education and ELL services (Linan-Thompson, Vaughn, Prater & Cirino, 2006). ELLs with disabilities are less likely to retain gains made as a result of specific interventions than their peers with only one area of need (Linan-Thompson et al., 2003). The less effective nature of reading interventions on ELLs with disabilities is critical to consider when determining how to best support this population.

The demands of content-specific vocabulary impact the achievement of students with both ELL and special education needs (Kim & Linan-Thompson, 2013). Technical and academic vocabulary as well as reading skills have a negative influence of the academic achievement in content area subjects for ELLs with disabilities (Kim & Linan-Thompson, 2013). Specifically, ELLs with disabilities acquire vocabulary more quickly when the vocabulary is presented in authentic contexts and explicitly taught (Kim & Linan-Thompson, 2013). On tasks that require

the application of learned vocabulary, ELLs with disabilities perform lower than students with just one area of need, even after interventions have been implemented (Filippini, Gerber, & Leafstedt, 2012).

In a study completed by Filippini et al. (2012), the hypothesis that adding explicit vocabulary instruction to a phonological awareness intervention would result in greater gains for ELLs with disabilities was confirmed. The hypothesis was tested with 71 first-grade students who primarily spoke Spanish from a Title I school in California, and the researcher used repeated measures and conducted multiple ANOVA tests to determine the impact of the interventions. The students, who received explicit vocabulary through the Vocab+ program for 30% of the instructional time, outperformed the students who only received phonological awareness instruction. These findings indicate that ELLs with disabilities require both explicit vocabulary and phonological awareness instruction.

ELLs with disabilities require explicit vocabulary instruction and practice to learn and retain new terms (Saenz, Fuchs, & Fuchs, 2005). Students who have time to practice vocabulary outside of the typical classroom setting make significant gains and are able to correctly apply vocabulary terms more consistently than students who are not able to practice vocabulary outside of the typical school setting (Saenz et al., 2005). Authentic social interactions in the new language have a significant impact on a student's acquisition of new vocabulary (Saenz et al., 2005). These interactions provide students with more opportunities to interact with the new language in a highly motivating and authentic setting.

The working memory of students with both ELL and special education needs also impacts the achievement in the classroom. Working memory negatively impacts a student's ability to correctly phonologically process vocabulary (Swanson et al., 2011). Students with

learning disabilities show deficits in the areas of phonological processing, naming speed, language measures of working memory, and in class attention (Swanson et al., 2012). These areas of weakness, compounded with the deficits in phonological processing of ELLs, exposes yet another cause of the low achievement of ELLs with disabilities. The school environment and parental understanding of how these factors interact also impacts student performance.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parent involvement in students' education has a positive impact on performance (Colombo, 2006). When parents speak a different language, or are from a different culture, there can be a barrier to the involvement of the parents or guardians (Colombo, 2006). The cultural obstacles that parents or guardians face with school interactions highlights the role that the macrosystem plays in student academic achievement or success. Although the special education process requires parent participation, many parents do not understand the consequences and implications of certain decisions (Trainor, 2010). The mesosystemic interactions between school personnel and parents or guardians influences student achievement and the services provided for the student. There is no mandate for parents' participation for students that only require ELL services. The current lack of requirement of parent involvement limits opportunities for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The cultural and social capital are not being translated into educational opportunities for students due to complex tensions between school and parent understanding (Trainor, 2010). Again, the macrosystems of the various settings are not necessarily connecting or aligning, which is negatively impacting the focal student. Many parent or guardians, especially those with limited education and from diverse backgrounds, are not able to participate and interact with the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process in a way that improves outcomes for the given student (Trainor, 2010). There are

obstacles for successful mesosystemic interactions, which can have a negative influence on the focal student. For example, a parent may not be aware of other available educational interventions, the long-term ramifications of placement in special education, or even what special education means.

Parents or guardians with a different cultural background often express unfamiliarity of the special education process (Hardin, Mereoiu, Hung, & Roach-Scott, 2009). For example, a specific culture might not recognize special education in the same way as special education is recognized in American public schools. This can cause misunderstanding and difficult interactions between the various settings for the focal student. Educators report frustration with the lack of parent involvement and understanding, but also report not having the time to explain aspects of the special education process in depth due to a lack of time and translators (Hardin et al., 2009). This highlights the role that the macrosystems of ELLs with disabilities play within the various interactions. IEPs need to be translated for non-native speakers during the IEP meeting; documents (e.g., progress reports, signed IEP) sent home, however, are often not translated. This prevents parents who speak another language from reviewing these documents independently. Educational backgrounds of parents can also impact the involvement with the special education process (Martin, Marshall, & Sale, 2004). For example, if a parent or guardian is not literate, not fluent in English, or has a lower reading level due to limited access to education, he or she may have difficulty understanding the special education terminology.

Time restraints for educators, parents, and the identification process are especially impeding when identifying pre-school age children (Hardin et al., 2009). ELLs that are enrolled in a Head Start program need to be referred for special education within the first 45 days of the program (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016). The time limitations on



identification make it difficult for educators to determine whether weaknesses are due to unfamiliarity with a new language, disability difficulties, or both (Hardin et al., 2009). Due to the difficulty with early identification, ELLs are often excluded from early intervention programs because they are not being identified as needing special education services. As a result, students with both areas of need often do not get access to the earliest possible intervention, which can negatively impact their future achievement.

The special education process can be very difficult for parents to navigate, particularly when the parent or guardian speaks another language and is from another culture (Trainor, 2010). The shift from focusing on a student's deficits during the initial eligibility process to a strength focus during annual IEP meetings is confusing to parents, and can cause parents or guardians to obtain a false sense of progress (Rogers, 2002). During an IEP meeting, evidence is presented to showcase progress rather than continued areas of deficit. This false sense of progress can cause parents or guardians to provide consent without being aware of the continued consent consequences or inhibit them from advocating for other options when necessary (Rogers, 2002). This continued consent can result in a dependency on specific school resources that are identified and provided to support student progress.

### **Teacher Quality**

The resources available in different schools impact the services specific students receive and, thus, their overall achievement (Blanchett et al., 2009). Teacher credentials, skills, training, and overall cultural understanding all impact the academic achievement for ELLs with disabilities and are a part of a student's exosystem (Feng & Sass, 2013; Paneque & Rodriguez, 2009).

**Teacher certification.** Due to the high demand of special education teachers, there are a growing number of special education teachers who are not certified to teach special education (Feng & Sass, 2013). Individuals can apply for a provisional license before receiving any training in special education or the needs of students with disabilities. As a result, some students with special education needs are receiving instruction from a teacher with no training or very limited training or experience. This macrosystem or beliefs based on the teacher's training can also influence the services and education provided to the student. There are also many teachers who have obtained certification in special education through alternative routes, such as Teach for America (Feng & Sass, 2013).

There is a positive correlation between teachers' special education certification and the achievement of students with disabilities (Feng & Sass, 2013). As a result of the demand for special education teachers and the high attrition of special education teachers leaving the field, many students with special education needs receive instruction from a teacher who is not certified in special education and may have multiple instructors during a given school year (Feng & Sass, 2013; McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2004). Similar trends can be observed with ELL teachers. With an increase in demand for ELL teachers, many general education teachers are being pulled to teach ELLs with very limited training on the needs of this population (Batt, 2008). There is also a deficit in the amount of teacher training required on collaboration (Hollins, 2011). For example, in Virginia only special education teachers are required to complete courses on co-teaching and collaboration (Regulations Governing Licensure, 2007). This presents an issue because collaboration is essential when addressing the multiple needs of ELLs with disabilities as well as other students with multiple areas of need. As presented in the networked

ecological theory framework, social interactions and settings are also essential to student learning and development.

Teacher certification also impacts how instruction is delivered to ELLs with disabilities. Because very few teachers are certified in special education, English as a second language, and a specific content area, students with both special education and ELL needs often receive fragmented services or only receive services in one area of need (García & Tyler, 2010). The service delivery models adopted by a school or county can also impact how services are provided for ELLs with disabilities (García & Tyler, 2010).

Many ELLs with disabilities are placed in classes that are geared towards addressing the special education needs (García & Tyler, 2010). It is then up to the special education or general education teacher to determine what ELL support the student needs and to collaborate with other ELL teachers (Paneque & Barbeta, 2006). Specific research on the collaboration between ELL teachers and special education teachers or between ELL teachers and general education teachers is extremely limited. More research is needed on these microsystemic or mesosystemic interactions to determine the impact of teacher collaboration with ELL teachers.

**Teacher diversity.** There is also a lack of certified special education teachers who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Paneque & Barbeta, 2006). About 38% of students that are identified as needing special education services are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, while only 10% of special education teachers are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Paneque & Barbeta, 2006). This can negatively impact the mesosystemic interactions between a student's community microsystem and the school microsystem networks.

When a teacher speaks a student's first language, there is a positive effect on the student's math, science, and reading achievement (Paneque & Rodriguez, 2009). Although teachers who speak a student's first language mostly instruct in the second language, they use the first language to redirect and praise (Paneque & Rodriguez, 2009). This allows a student to understand the praise or redirection more quickly and builds students' self-efficacy (Paneque & Rodriguez, 2009). There is also a need for teacher preparation programs to emphasize the language needs for ELLs (Paneque & Rodriguez, 2009).

**Teacher self-efficacy.** Teacher self-efficacy can be defined as a judgement on one's skills or ability to impact desired outcomes (Leyser et al., 2011). Teacher self-efficacy has been linked to many different educational outcomes such as student achievement, motivation, and organization (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Teacher behaviors are related to their self-efficacy, and thus have an influence on specific student outcomes (Jerald, 2007). Teachers with a strong sense of self-efficacy tend to be more resilient, more willing to try new strategies within the classroom, and exhibit greater levels of planning and organization (Jerald, 2007). Teacher self-efficacy is important to consider when developing a better understanding of the low achievement of ELLs with disabilities because teachers have been found to have low self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities (Rodriguez, 2009). Thus, many educational outcomes for ELLs with disabilities can be attributed to teachers with low self-efficacy when meeting the needs of this population. Bandura (1977) identified experience or performance accomplishments as an important factor in determining a teacher's self-efficacy.

When working with students who are dually identified, teachers who are traditionally certified in special education and took courses that explicitly addressed the needs of ELL students had a higher self-efficacy than those teachers that were not (Paneque & Barbetta, 2006).

This is important to note because many teacher preparation programs do not offer course work that explicitly addresses the needs of ELLs (More, Spies, Morgan, & Baker, 2016). The lack of course work focused on meeting the needs of ELLs with disabilities is associated with low teacher perceptions of preparedness which leads to low teacher self-efficacy (Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2010).

Teacher credentials and skills also have a large impact on the achievement of ELLs with disabilities (Feng & Sass, 2013). Due to lack of resources, many students are not being educated by teachers who are trained to address their specific needs which contributes to a lack of preparedness and negative attitude or beliefs (Feng & Sass, 2013; Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2010). Deficits in understanding of ELL needs and the specific language and culture of the students also can have a negative impact on overall student achievement and teacher self-efficacy (Paneque & Rodriguez, 2009).

### **Service Delivery Models**

Service delivery models can be defined as the various models in which specially designed instruction and services are provided to students. Students that require special education support or ELL services have various service delivery models based on staffing, the philosophies of the school, and the needs of the student (Kingsley & Mailloux, 2013). The exosystem and mesosystem interactions play a critical role in the achievement of ELLs with disabilities especially when considering the various microsystem interaction that ELLs with disabilities have. There are three major types of service delivery models provided for students with special education needs and ELLs: (a) push-in, (b) pull out, and (c) co-teaching.

The push-in model occurs when a service provider goes into a student's classroom to provide services within the classroom environment (Cirrin et al., 2010). This model has shown to

be effective with students receiving speech and language services who need support generalizing and applying the skills learned previously or in a small group setting (Cirrin et al., 2010). This model has shown to be ineffective in supporting ELLs with disabilities (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). The pull-out service delivery model occurs when students are removed from a given class or time in the day to provide services. This model varies based on the student's needs and the structures within the school. For example, this could look like a student being pulled from an English class to receive instruction on decoding. Students at the secondary level being enrolled in a specific intervention class can also be categorized as this model. A major criticism of this model is that it removes students from instructional time with their peers causing them to miss critical instruction (Scanlan & Zehrbach, 2010). The co-teaching model occurs when two teachers work together to accomplish all classroom responsibilities and meet the needs of the students within the classroom. Even though there are obstacles associated with this model, co-teaching has been shown to have a positive impact on student learning outcomes for both students with disabilities and ELLs (Friend & Cook, 2010).

### **Assessment and Placement**

Because assessments are how achievement is ultimately measured, it is essential to consider this aspect when evaluating the low achievement of ELLs with disabilities. Ineffective accommodations, culturally and linguistically biased practices, and special education identification all contribute to the gap in achievement between ELLs with disabilities and their non-identified peers and peers with only one area of need.

**High stakes testing.** Historically, ELLs and students with special education needs have not been included in high-stakes testing (Abedi, 2004). Accommodations are an important part of the high stakes testing process for students who require special education and ELL services

(Alexander, 2017). The comprehensive accommodations used to support ELLs, students with special education needs, and ELLs with disabilities are not appropriately addressing each subgroup's specific needs (Adbei, Hofstetter, & Lord, 2004). For example, an English dictionary accommodation is not appropriate for a student with low mastery of the second language (Abdei et al., 2004). Many students also need to be taught how to use specific accommodations to benefit from using them (Alexander, 2017).

The benefit of standardized accommodations is also unclear (Elbaum, 2007). Many students with disabilities only see slight increases of scores when given accommodations, while other students are not impacted by accommodations at all (Elbaum, 2007). There is also a discrepancy with the frequency in which accommodations are used and variances in how teachers instruct students to use an accommodation (Alexander, 2017). For example, the use of a dictionary on an assessment is irrelevant if the student does not know how to use a dictionary. The reliability and validity of high stakes tests and classroom assessments in determining the knowledge of ELLs with disabilities has also been challenged. Banerjee and Guiberson (2012) suggested that the current assessment practices are not culturally and linguistically responsive. The macrosystems of the test creators can vary greatly from the many macrosystems of ELLs with disabilities, and thus putting this population at a disadvantage. Difficulties with written and oral expression also impact the scores on tests that require written or oral responses and make it difficult for a teacher to distinguish between actual knowledge and deficits in written or oral expression (Barrera, 2006).

**Identification and placement.** There are also discrepancies on how ELLs are identified by different counties and states. The state can determine how ELL status is determined, so students who are qualified for ELL services in one state may not be considered eligible in

another (Abedi, 2004). The requirements of the state exosystem impacts the ELL services that the student is eligible for. The Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) requires states to assess proficiency levels and monitor progress, yet how proficiency levels are measured is up to the specific state. The structure of ELL services and determination does not always fit into the requirements set up by No Child Left Behind (2001) and annual yearly progress determinations because once students achieve proficiency they are no longer considered ELLs (Menken, 2010).

Assessment practices for determining if a student requires special education services is also important to consider when evaluating the achievement of ELLs with disabilities. There is a disproportionate number of ELLs in special education and many professionals indicate that this is the result of assessment practices that are not culturally and linguistically responsive (Barrera, 2006; Ortiz & Yates, 2001). The assessments that are given to determine eligibility need to be translated for students that are not English proficient. This is an issue because many assessments used during the eligibility process do not have translated versions and translating the test into a non-standardized version could impact the validity and reliability of the results (McCardle, Mele-McCarthy, & Leos, 2005).

### **Summary**

Many factors impact the achievement of ELLs with disabilities, impacting students' ability to show mastery of content. The obstacles to achievement can be organized into five major categories: language and processing, parent involvement, teacher quality, service delivery models, and assessment practices. ELLs with disabilities take longer to process information than their non-identified peers, struggle with new vocabulary, the acquisition of a new language, and have difficulty with higher order reading skills (Azzolini et al., 2012; Saenz et al., 2005; Swanson et al., 2011). The resources that specific schools have impact the types of service



models provided for ELLs with disabilities (García & Tyler, 2010). Due to deficits in teacher credentials and expertise, ELLs with disabilities often receive fragmented services (García & Tyler, 2010). The researcher focused on the obstacles of teacher quality and service delivery models to ultimately address the problem of practice. Teacher quality and service delivery models were selected due to the research on the impact that teacher quality can have on student achievement (Feng & Sass, 2013; Kingsley & Mailloux, 2013). The researcher also selected these obstacles as areas of focus based on her position within the setting and limitations within the current research on ELLs with disabilities.

## Chapter 2

### Assessing the Needs of Teachers Working with ELLs with Disabilities

Students with only special education needs, students with only ELL needs, and non-identified peers all have higher academic achievement than ELLs with disabilities (Newman et al., 2011). Although there are many factors related to this gap in achievement, this needs assessment focused on teacher's perception of the influence that collaboration and varying service models have on student success. These areas were chosen as areas of focus due the findings surrounding the impact that teacher quality has on the achievement of ELLs with disabilities (Feng & Sass, 2013; Kingsley & Mailloux, 2013). This focus was also chosen because there is limited research on the various ways in which the needs of ELLs with disabilities are met.

### Context of the Study

The needs assessment was conducted in a middle school in the eastern United States that serves 1,153 students in Grades 7 and 8. The school was labeled as being in danger of losing accreditation based on the county's school support composite index ranking. The school support composite index is based on two factors, assessed over a 3-year average: the number of students not passing the state assessment in reading and mathematics and the achievement gap between the European American and Asian subgroup and the African American and Hispanic subgroup. The context of this study was a majority minority school with 46% of the population requiring free or reduced lunch (see Table 1 for complete demographics). Majority minority means that ethnic or racial minorities make up the majority of the school population. The number of ELLs steadily increased every school year, causing a staff increase of ELL teachers.

Table 1

*School Demographics for the 2016-2017 School Year*

Reporting Category	Percentage
Asian	11
African American	10
Hispanic	40
European American	34
Other	5
Limited English Proficiency	25
Special Education	20
Free/Reduced Lunch	46

According to the schoolwide data, students who are identified as needing both special education and ELL services perform lower than all other subgroups. According to the 2014 sixth-grade state assessment data for the current seventh-grade students, students who required both special education and ELL services had an average score of 358 out of 600 on the reading state assessment; a score of 400 is considered passing. Students who required only special education services scored an average score of 397, whereas students that required only ELL services scored an average of 415. Students who were not identified as needing additional services had an average score of 447. These results are consistent with the English 7 Unit 1 summative data that showed that ELLs with disabilities scored 20% below students who only require ELL support, 11% below students who only require special education support, and 38% below students who are not identified as needing either support.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of the needs assessment was to investigate teacher perceptions of working with ELLs with disabilities. The focus of this needs assessment was to determine what service models were available and to determine the levels of teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. The findings from this needs assessment were used to conduct additional

research to develop a targeted intervention designed to decrease the achievement gap between ELLs with disabilities and their non-identified peers or peers with only one area of need. This needs assessment attempted to answer the following research questions: (a) What are the differing service delivery models provided for ELLs with disabilities? (b) How does collaboration influence teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities? and (c) What are teacher perceptions when working with ELLs with disabilities?

### **Method**

In this section, I describe the sample, setting, variables, measures, and data collection and analysis. An explanatory mixed methods design was used to develop this needs assessment (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The qualitative data collected during the interview helped to enhance and inform the quantitative findings from the survey. The quantitative data in this study were emphasized and was collected and analyzed prior to completing the interview.

### **Participants**

The participants were selected from a single middle school. All 143 of the faculty and service providers at this setting were invited to take this survey at the end of a faculty meeting. Consent forms were provided at the faculty meeting and left in the copy rooms (see Appendix A). Faculty and administration that filled out the consent forms were then given a survey to complete. Of the 39 middle school teachers who agreed to participate, four were male and 35 were female. The group averaged 10 years of teaching experience. The roles of the participants were: (a) three administrators, (b) 18 general education teachers, (c) seven special education teachers, (d) eight ELL teachers, and (e) three other service providers (i.e., counselor, instructional coach, speech pathologist). Three general education teachers, one special education

teacher, and one ELL teacher were randomly selected to participate in a focus group interview. All interview participants had over 3 years of experience in education.

### **Measures and Instrumentation**

Based on the review of the literature, variables were identified and a survey was developed to administer to teachers, service providers, and administrators. This needs assessment focused on three different variables: (a) collaboration with special education and ELL teachers; (b) service delivery models; and (c) teacher self-efficacy. For the purposes of this study, collaboration was defined as the time that teachers spent working together on a given task. Service delivery models were the way in which services were provided for a specific student. Two different data sources were used to address the research questions. First, all 39 participants completed a survey and then five participants were randomly selected from three groups to participate in a focus group interview.

**Survey.** The survey was printed on paper and distributed. The survey had 17 questions and was anonymous (see Appendix B). The first question required the participant to identify his or her role. The next 13 items comprised various statements about students who are identified as requiring both special education and ELL services. The participants were asked to identify the level of agreement with each statement using a five-point Likert-type scale (*strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*). These questions were created based on the literature included in the previous literature review and focused on their perceptions with interacting with ELLs with disabilities. The first two questions allowed the researcher to gather information about the participants' role and level of interaction with ELLs with disabilities. Question 4 focused on ability to accommodate for ELLs with disabilities which aligned with the research about ELLs with disabilities receiving inappropriate or ineffective accommodations (Elbaum, 2007). Questions 3,

5, 7 and 8 focused on teacher's perception of their ability to support ELLs with disabilities. These questions were included to address research question 4 and align with the literature on teacher quality and the low self-efficacy of teachers when working with ELLs with disabilities (Batt, 2008; Paneque & Rodriguez, 2009). Question 6 asked about the participants' desire for professional development about ELLs with disabilities and questions 9 through 11 focused on language acquisition and vocabulary. Questions 12 through 14 focused on processing and time for ELLs with disabilities. The last two questions focused on the frequency of collaboration with special education and ELL personnel. The participants needed to select if they collaborated *daily*, *weekly*, *monthly*, or *never*.

**Interview.** The interview questions were based on the survey results and the review of the literature (see Appendix C). Questions a, c, and f focused on teacher perceptions when working with ELLs with disabilities to answer the research question 4. Question g focused on how services were provided to ELLs with disabilities in the setting to answer research question 1.

## **Procedure**

This section reviews the data collection and analysis processes used in this needs assessment to address the research questions. The researcher collected all data over a 5-week process outlined below.

**Data collection.** The data were collected over a 5-week period by the researcher and an observer, who was also an employee at the setting. The data from the survey helped inform the questions asked on the focus group interview.

**Survey.** The consent form and survey were distributed in areas with a high number of staff, such as at a staff meeting and in the room with the copy machine. Fifty-five surveys were

handed out and 39 were returned. Participants had 1 week to return the surveys. A full staff email was sent out to remind participants to return surveys. No duplicates were provided. Participants returned the surveys by leaving them in the researcher's school mailbox.

***Interview.*** The interview took place in a classroom at the middle school after school and lasted approximately 1 hour. The interview was not recorded. During the interview, I took notes and an observer used a checklist to monitor responses. The notes taken focused on the responses that each participant provided. Although procedures for the interview were not defined for the participants, each participant took turns answering the questions presented. The observer was a special education teacher at the setting who had experience collecting frequency data on student behavior. The observer tallied each time a participant mentioned any of the following: strategy specific for ELLs, processing time, vocabulary, collaboration, and reading. These categories were developed based on the findings from the survey and the current literature.

***Data analysis.*** The survey results were analyzed and reviewed first, to help shape the interview questions.

***Survey.*** I inputted the survey responses into the SPSS system by hand. The frequency of collaboration with special education and ELL teachers was determined. Multiple correlation tests were completed to determine if there were a relationship between teacher perceptions and frequency of collaboration.

***Interview.*** The notes taken during the interview were reviewed to evaluate the major themes of discussion. Thematic analysis was used to understand the data collected during the interview (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher used Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps for conducting thematic analysis. The researcher read and re-read the notes from the interview. Themes from this data emerged and were reviewed. Quantitative content analysis was used to

analyze the checklist data from the observer. The data from the checklist was reviewed and inputted into the SPSS system. A frequency analysis was used to determine the frequency of the predetermined topics discussed.

## **Findings and Discussion**

The survey and interview data provided important information about the needs within the given setting. The amount of time to collaborate and effective strategies for this population emerged as major factors when evaluating the underachievement of ELLs with disabilities.

### **Teacher Collaboration and Perceptions**

**Survey.** The survey data showed that there is a relatively low frequency of daily and weekly collaboration with ELL service providers. Only 23% of the sample reported collaborating with ELL service providers daily, 33% weekly, 30% monthly and 10% never. These numbers are significantly lower than the collaboration with special education service providers (see Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2

#### *Collaboration with Special Education Service Providers*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	28	71.8	73.7	73.7
	Weekly	10	25.6	26.3	100
	Total	38	97.4	100	
Missing	System	1	2.6		
Total		39	100		



Table 3

*Collaboration with ELL Service Providers*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	9	23.1	23.7	23.7
	Weekly	13	33.3	34.2	57.9
	Monthly	12	30.8	31.6	89.5
	Never	4	10.3	10.5	100
	Total	38	97.4	100	
Missing	System	1	2.6		
Total		39	100		

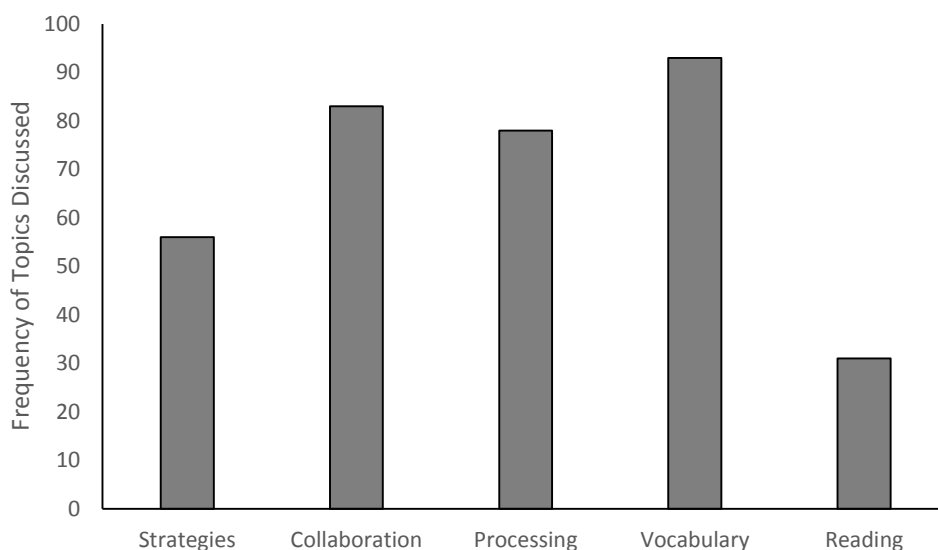
The data also indicated a relatively strong correlation between the frequency of collaboration with ELL service providers and the participants' belief that the needs of ELLs with disabilities are being met. Seventy-seven percent of the participants believed that ELLs with disabilities require more time to show mastery than their peers with just ELL needs. This information indicated that teachers believe that special education needs negatively impact the language acquisition process.

When explicitly asked how special education needs impact the acquisition of English, however, participants appeared to be slightly more divided. About 54% of the participants agreed with this statement while about 23% responded "I don't know" and another 23% disagreed. This showed that there may be some discrepancy in the teacher understanding of how special education needs impact language acquisition.

**Interview.** The topic that was discussed the most during the interview was vocabulary. The participants in the interview agreed that the acquisition of new vocabulary is very difficult for ELLs with disabilities. They continued to discuss how many ELLs with disabilities often need extra time to learn complex technical vocabulary. According to the interview participants, weaknesses with academic vocabulary also impact this population's progress. The interview

participants also agreed that on assessments ELLs with disabilities seem to miss questions with complex vocabulary even after explicit instruction.

Collaboration was also discussed in great detail during the interview. The majority of the participants believed that they needed more time to collaborate with other teachers to fully address the needs of the students in their classrooms. A graph representing the frequency each topic was mentioned in the interview can be seen in Figure 3.



*Figure 3.* Frequency of topics discussed during the interview.

### **Service Delivery Models**

Through the interview discussion, three service models seemed to emerge: consult, push-in or pull-out, and team teaching. Consult was the most frustrating for the group. In this model, the special education, ELL, and general education teachers collaborate through the collaborative learning planning time. This model was frustrating to the participants for a variety of reasons including: time limitations, absences of key personnel, and differences in input depending on the specific teacher. The push-in or pull-out method was thought to be the most common by the participants. In this method students are enrolled in a separate support class or service providers

will push into a specific content class. A positive attribute discussed for this model was that continuous services are provided, however frustrations were expressed about the lack of communication between support classes and core classes and the frequency of teacher push in. One participant discussed how an ELL service provider does not regularly come into the classroom and there is no time to collaborate with this individual before the lesson.

The last service model, co-teaching, was discussed by one participant and the other participants were not fully aware of what this was. In this service model, two teachers who are a dually certified team teach a smaller group of ELLs with disabilities. One of the teachers in this model was certified to teach ELL and middle school English while the other teacher was certified to teach special education and middle school English. Information on this model was limited due to the fact that only one participant was familiar with it.

In conclusion, teachers feel as if they need more strategies to effectively work with ELLs with disabilities. The amount of collaboration influences a teacher's evaluation of their ability to meet the needs of ELLs with disabilities. Another major finding of this needs assessment was the determination of three different types of service delivery models for ELLs. Each model that was discussed had specific strengths and challenges. Further investigation is needed to explicitly determine the impact that these models have on student achievement. Although the initial finding indicated that there is a correlation between teacher perceptions and collaboration, more research needs to be completed to fully understand this relationship.

## Chapter 3

### Effective Teaching Practices for ELLs with Disabilities

The various service models provided to ELLs with disabilities impact the students' academic performance (García & Tyler, 2010). I conducted a needs assessment at a middle school in the eastern United States, which included a survey and interview. The survey findings indicated a positive correlation between collaboration with special education teachers and ELL teachers and teacher perceptions when working with students that are dually identified. There was also a low frequency of daily and weekly collaboration with ELL service providers. General education teachers indicated that collaboration with ELL service providers is significantly lower than the collaboration with special education service providers. The research also showed that teacher have very low self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities and would like more professional development focusing on meeting the needs of ELLs with disabilities (Paneque & Barbetta, 2006).

The interview findings showed that the majority of the participants believed that they needed more time to collaborate with other teachers to fully address the needs of the students in their professional context. The participants in the interview discussed the four different service delivery models for ELLs with disabilities: consult, push-in, pull-out, and co-teaching; the consult was the most frustrating for the group.

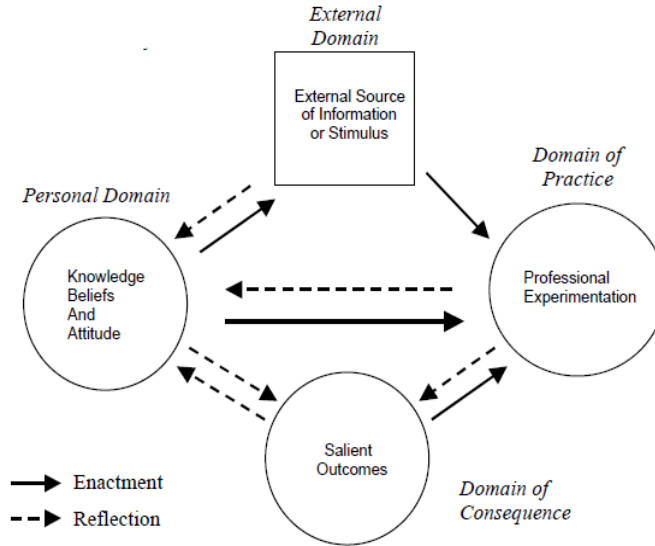
Due to the findings of the needs assessment and the focus on co-teaching at the target school, this chapter further investigates teacher self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy was chosen due to the impact that teacher self-efficacy can have on student performance and teacher willingness to try new strategies (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Although a specific self-efficacy scale was not used in the needs assessment, the needs assessment did show that the teacher

participants had low perceptions of their abilities to meet the needs of the students. The needs assessment also showed that teachers that collaborated with ELL or special education teachers had higher perceptions of personal skills when working with ELLs with disabilities than the participants that did not collaborate or only collaborated monthly. This literature review focuses on the benefits of collaboration and co-teaching and how teacher self-efficacy can be impacted by these constructs. Co-teaching was investigated as a possible intervention to support teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Teaching is a complex job that involves many different skills. Thus, it seems reasonable that in order to create a change environment for teachers, multiple domains of the teacher are impacted. There is a large body of research that focuses on teacher change and how teacher change can ultimately impact student outcomes (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). For the purposes of this study, *change* was described as teacher learning or growth (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002).

The interconnected model of professional growth provides a framework for this study and a visualization for how teacher change occurs (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; see Figure 4). This model focuses on the reflection and enactment processes within the four domains and builds on Guskey's (1986) model of teacher change. The pedagogy of each teacher is at the center of this model. The interconnected model of professional teacher growth accounts for teacher learning and growth through a consistent and cyclical process that is unique and situated within an individual teacher's understanding (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002).



*Figure 4.* The interconnected model of professional growth. In this model, four domains influence teacher change and growth. Connections are made between these domains through enactment and reflection. In this figure, the solid lines indicate enactment and the broken lines indicate reflection. Reprinted with permission from “Elaborating a model of teacher professional growth” by D. Clarke and H. Hollingsworth, 2002, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 18, p. 951. Copyright 2002 by Elsevier Science.

The four domains within the interconnected model of professional growth are the personal domain, the domain of consequence, the domain of practice, and the external domain. The personal domain focuses on a teacher’s personal knowledge, beliefs, and attitude toward a given topic and aligns with the concept of teacher self-efficacy as explained by Bandura (1993). The domain of consequence refers to the outcomes that the teacher experiences and the domain of practice refers to the teacher’s willingness and/or experience with trying new methods. The external domain refers to the varying sources where teachers can get information and support. Reflection and enactment in this model connect the various domains to facilitate change (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). There is not a singular, linear path that one must take to create change, and thus it is individualized to the teacher and the experience (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002).

The interconnected model for professional growth is positioned within both the social cognitive theory of learning and the situated learning perspective. This model for professional

growth aligns with the social cognitive perspective because teachers are learning or changing through social interactions. Behavior, cognition, and the environment are all interacting to produce change or learning. The interconnected model connects with the situated learning perspective because teachers are changing and creating new knowledge within given situations or authentic tasks.

The interconnected model for professional growth was chosen as the framework for this study because it shows how traditional models of professional development are not designed to produce lasting changes (McDonough, Clarkson, & Scott, 2010). This model aligns with a co-teaching relationship because teachers are learning and growing from their interactions with one another. The co-teachers are providing support and information to one another, which is impacting both the personal and external domain. Because the teachers are more likely to try something when they have seen some positive results, teachers who co-teach together are more likely to try something new that the other teacher is familiar with (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). This willingness to participate in experiential learning impacts both the domain of practice and the domain of consequence.

### **Literature Review**

In this section, teacher self-efficacy, collaboration, reflection and co-teaching is further examined to help inform an intervention for teachers of ELLs with disabilities. Teacher self-efficacy and collaboration were chosen as areas of focus based on the findings of the needs assessment and previous literature review discussed in Chapter 1. Research on collaboration and embedded professional development, led the investigation into the co-teaching literature.

#### **Teacher Self-Efficacy**

A teacher's sense of self-efficacy has been linked to many different educational outcomes such as student achievement, motivation, and organization (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Teacher behaviors are related to their self-efficacy, and thus have an influence on specific student outcomes (Jerald, 2007). Teachers with a strong sense of self-efficacy tend to be more resilient, more willing to try new strategies within the classroom, and exhibit greater levels of planning and organization (Jerald, 2007). Teacher self-efficacy is a complex concept that can have an impact on many different educational outcomes both directly and indirectly.

**Factors impacting teacher self-efficacy.** According to a study completed by Leyser et al. (2011) years of study, experience with special education students, and training all impact the self-efficacy of teachers, both special education and general education. In this study, 992 special education teachers and general education teachers were given a version of the Extended Teacher Self-Efficacy scale. Using a two-way multivariate analysis of variance, Leyser et al. (2011) found a significant main effect ( $p = .008$ ) for the years on study on teacher self-efficacy. This shows that teacher knowledge or understanding can have an impact on teacher self-efficacy. These findings are supported by the work of Feng and Sass (2013) who concluded that special education teachers who obtain certification through traditional college programs are more effective than teachers who acquire certification through alternative means.

Leyser et al. (2011) also found a significant main effect on major and teacher self-efficacy ( $p = .026$ ). Special education majors had higher self-efficacy when working with struggling students than compared to general education teachers. This study also showed that increase in experience with students with special education needs positively impacts ( $p = .001$ ) teacher overall self-efficacy and influences a teacher's feelings about inclusion.



Teacher self-efficacy when working with culturally and linguistically diverse students is also positively influenced with experience working with diverse learners (Settlage, Southernland, Smith, & Ceglie, 2009). Chu and García (2014) built on previous findings to determine how self-efficacy impacted special education teachers who work with culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Three hundred special education teachers responded to an online survey (Chu & García, 2014). The researchers determined that there was a significant correlation between special education teachers' cultural teacher self-efficacy ( $r = .44, p < .01$ ) and culturally responsive teaching outcomes (Chu & García, 2014). Culturally responsive teaching can be described as using cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives to teach students more effectively (Gay, 2002).

Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) surveyed 2,249 middle school and elementary teachers using the Norwegian Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale and found a strong positive correlation (.59) between time pressures and emotional exhaustion. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) then found a negative correlation between emotional exhaustion and teacher self-efficacy. This is important to consider because teachers of ELLs with disabilities have many different time pressures such as the IEP process, content-specific pacing guides and state language progress.

**ELLs with disabilities.** Teacher self-efficacy is especially important when considering the needs of ELLs with disabilities. The needs assessment discussed previously, determined that the participants had low perceptions of their own abilities when working with ELLs with disabilities. The literature also indicates that teachers with high self-efficacy make less referrals for special education (Savolainen, Engelbrecht, Nel, & Malinen, 2012) and report having more success with students that have learning or behavior issues (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Clausen et al. (2013) found that while fully certified special education teachers had high overall self-

efficacy, special education teachers had lower self-efficacy when determining accommodations for ELLs with disabilities. Again, pointing to teacher self-efficacy as a needed area of focus when evaluating the achievement of ELLs with disabilities. These findings provided a basis for the need of inquiry into ways to improve teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities.

Building on the findings of Carlson, Brauen, Klein, Schroll, and Willig (2002), Paneque and Barbetta (2006) studied the teacher self-efficacy of special education teachers of ELLs with disabilities to answer the following research questions: (a) Is there a correlation between teacher variables (i.e., highest degree earned, degree or certification in special education, experience, ELL endorsement, proficiency in the home language of the students, and experience working with students from lower socioeconomic groups) and teacher self-efficacy for special education teachers of ELLs with disabilities; (b) Which teacher variable is the best predictors of teacher self-efficacy for special education teacher working with ELLs with disabilities; and (c) What do in-service and pre-service special education teachers view as most helpful for themselves when working with ELLs with disabilities. Two hundred two teachers were given a survey that was created by the researchers, yet tested for both reliability and validity. The survey was based on Bandura's (2001) *Guide for Construction Self-Efficacy Scales* and was comprised of both closed and open ended responses. Through the analysis of the quantitative survey data, Paneque and Barbetta (2006) found that proficiency in the student's native language had a statistically significant impact ( $p = .002$ ) on the teacher's self-efficacy.

Two major themes came from the open ended questions on the survey: organizational issues and teacher issues impacting teacher performance. Organizational issues were defined by the amount of support and access to other resources. The teacher issues referred to experience

and language proficiency. These findings are important to the current study because they specifically identify possible areas to address to improve teacher self-efficacy with ELLs with disabilities. These findings are also supported by Killoran et al. (2013) and the current needs assessment.

**Improving teacher self-efficacy.** Because teacher self-efficacy impacts many different educational outcomes, determining how to support teacher self-efficacy is of critical importance. Bandura (1977) identified experience or performance accomplishments as an important factor in determining a teacher's self-efficacy. Hoy (2000) built on Bandura's (1977) work and described two major factors that shape teacher self-efficacy: vicarious experiences and social persuasion. These findings align with the personal domain, the domain of practice, and the external domain discussed within the interconnected model for professional growth.

Because of the many impacts that teacher self-efficacy can have on student learning outcomes, professional development has been designed to support teacher self-efficacy and facilitate teachers change. Chu and García (2014) found that effective professional development had a positive effect on teacher self-efficacy when working with culturally and linguistically diverse students. Although effective professional development was not explicitly defined in this study, it is important to note that professional development influences and strengthens teacher self-efficacy (Chu & García, 2014).

Professional development that focused on differentiating instruction also had a positive influence on teacher self-efficacy (Dixon, Yssel, McConnell, & Hardin, 2014). Teachers with greater time spent completing professional development had higher self-efficacy and were more likely to differentiate instruction within their specific classrooms (Dixon et al., 2014). In a randomized control trial, Ross and Bruce (2007) found that after professional development the

teachers in the treatment group scored higher on the posttest measure after adjusting for pretest scores. The measure used in the study focused on student engagement, classroom management, and ability to implement appropriate teaching strategies. The professional development was also developed to address these areas of need. These findings are important to note because it shows that specific professional development can impact overall self-efficacy over a relatively short amount of time (i.e., 9 weeks).

Classroom embedded professional development is professional development provided to small groups of teachers within their specific content or practice. Classroom embedded professional development is gaining popularity and is designed to facilitate teacher learning within the day-to-day teaching responsibilities and tasks (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, 2010). Bruce, Esmonde, Ross, Dookie, and Beatty (2010) examined the impact that classroom embedded professional development had on math teachers' self-efficacy and student achievement. Through the mixed methods study, Bruce et al. (2010) found that overall teacher self-efficacy and student achievement scores improved after the intervention. The study also confirmed that self-efficacy is impacted by experiences and teacher interactions with one another. Although there are a limited number of empirical studies on embedded professional development and its impact on self-efficacy, this is an important area of consideration. The concept of embedded professional development aligns with Bandura's (1977) concept of performance accomplishment and the situated learning perspective. The concept of embedded professional development leads into an analysis of collaboration to help develop a deeper understanding of the role that collaboration has in regard to the teacher self-efficacy of ELLs with disabilities.

## **Collaboration**

Collaboration has been defined in different ways across many diverse fields. In education, collaboration can be defined as a process in which “two or more individuals with complementary skills interact to create a shared understanding that none had previously possessed or could have come to on their own” (Montiel-Overall, 2005, p. 3). Collaboration involves a shared creation. Lawson (2004) describes collaboration as both a process innovation and product innovation. Collaboration can be characterized as teachers working together to improve their overall practice (Riveros, 2012). Although the definition of collaboration differs slightly across disciplines, collaboration is a critical component of effective leadership and growth (Coleman, 2011).

Collaboration impacts teacher self-efficacy (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010) and when teachers collaborate with one another to develop classroom activities and lessons, both teachers and students benefit (Puchner & Taylor, 2006). When collaboration between teachers occurs, each teacher is more likely to change behaviors and try new practices than a teacher who is working in isolation (York-Barr et al., 2007). For example, when teachers collaborate to complete a lesson on a given topic they can discuss possible activities and ways to support wide ranges of students. In a case study around collaboration within the lesson study process, teachers found that they were able to consider larger variety of structures and activities to enhance student learning (Puchner & Taylor, 2006). Teacher self-efficacy also emerged as a variable that was linked to collaboration in this study (Puchner & Taylor, 2006). The teacher participants indicated that collaboration with one another had a positive impact on their self-efficacy beliefs surrounding lesson engagement and incorporation of critical and creative thinking skills.

Teachers who collaborate with others are able to provide support, feedback, and follow-up with one another. According to Guskey (2002), this support is essential to teacher change.

The support, feedback, and follow-up that teachers can provide to one another also addresses the personal and external domains as well as the reflection and enactment process discussed within the theoretical framework. The external domain is directly impacted because the information is being provided to the teacher through interactions with other colleagues.

Within models of collaborative professional development, teachers work together to co-construct knowledge within authentic tasks (Butler et al., 2004). Teachers engage in joint inquiry to learn new strategies and engage with change. Butler et al. (2004) conducted a 2-year study on teacher collaboration and the effectiveness of the strategic content learning approach. Based on the interview and observation data, Butler et al. (2004) found that teacher collaboration helped to support active reflection for the teacher participants and the students in their classes. Teachers in this study, were also able to self-regulate their learning and concluded that collaboration helped them to develop new solutions to problems and prompted effective strategy use in the classroom.

Collaboration provides teachers with opportunities to learn from one another (Johnson, 2003). When teachers work together, they are able to strengthen content understanding and pedagogical knowledge (Johnson, 2003). Through a questionnaire and follow up interviews of teachers from four different Australian schools, Johnson (2003) found that collaboration was particularly effective for new teachers who have limited experience teaching their specific content, which aligns with Hoy's (2000) findings on the importance of student teaching on self-efficacy as well as Bandura's (1977) discussion of performance accomplishments. The influence that collaboration has on teachers that are new to a particular content is also important to note because special education and ELL teachers can be moved to a variety of different contents. This points to collaboration as a means to support learning especially the learning of ELL and special

education teachers. Johnson (2003) also found that collaboration helped to promote interdisciplinary instruction and activities for students.

Levine and Marcus (2007) conducted a case study on two different teams of teachers for a 2-year period. The study showed that collaboration between teachers allows teachers to seek out assistance more easily and timely than teachers who work in isolation. In Levine and Marcus's (2007) study, teacher teams collaborated together and shared 80 students in what was referred to as a learning house or team. Teachers had weekly collaboration time, in which they were able to problem solve, discuss specific student achievement, and align content as necessary. During this collaboration time, the teacher participants also discussed specific ways to address the needs of struggling ELLs in the classroom. Together the teachers developed supports that could be put in place in all content areas for the discussed students. The teachers reported seeing improvement for these students after the supports were put into place. This shows how collaboration can specifically impact struggling students and change teacher practices.

## **Reflection**

Reflection is a critical component of the theoretical framework and teacher change (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). Reflection can be defined as a process that builds meanings and a systematic way of thinking that moves a learner from one experience to the next while fostering a deeper understanding through the interactions with others (Kayapinar, 2016). Reflection has also been referred to as "the continuous interplays between doing something and revision of our thoughts" (Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2011, p.133). As the interconnected model of professional growth represents, reflection plays a critical role in teacher change and the ability to make connections between the various domains as explained previously (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002).

Reflection is considered a lever for change (Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2011; Luttenberg et al., 2017). A study completed by Cuesta, Azcarate, and Cardenoso (2016) showed that reflection through collaboration with other teachers had a positive influence on changes in teacher practices, ideas, and attitudes. In this case study, 12 teachers participated in professional development that facilitated group and personal reflections. Participants were asked to create an implement various lessons, and then reflect on the successes and challenges as a group. Cuesta et al. (2016) discussed that after the intervention, the participants were able to recognize their own problems and demonstrated “a positive attitude to tackling them” (p.147). This is especially important to consider because these findings connect with the findings from the needs assessment as well as the research on teacher self-efficacy and collaboration explained in the previous sections.

Reflection facilitates continuous learning, and is especially important for ELL teachers due to the wide range of needs of this population (Kayapinar, 2013). Teachers that work with students with ELL needs are required to meet the needs of students from very culturally, emotionally, and educationally diverse backgrounds (Reis-Jorge, 2007). Kayapinar (2016) conducted a study specifically focusing on how reflection influenced the self-efficacy of ELL teachers. Kayapinar (2016) utilized the reflective practitioner development model to facilitate reflection with the participants and used the Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) to measure the self-efficacy of the participants before and after the intervention. The study showed a statistically significant increase ( $p = .007$ ) in teacher self-efficacy.

Reflective thinking about teaching and teaching practices has shown to be an essential component to teacher growth and overall learning (Brantley-Dias, Dias, Frisch, & Rushton,



2008). Various methods have been documented by research as tools for developing meaningful reflections (Marcos, Miguel, & Tillema, 2010; Calandra, Brentley-Dias, Lee, & Fox, 2009). The major categories of reflection methods consist of (a) journal writing, (b) critical incidents, (c) multimedia cases, and (e) video (Marcos et al., 2010). Journal writing occurs when teachers reflect about their experiences through writing down their responses to various experiences (Byrd, 2010). Critical incident reflection occur when a participant specifically reflects on a moment or event that the participant believes cause change or was a turning point (Calandra et al., 2009). Multimedia cases occur when an individual teacher or groups of teachers respond to various scenarios and then analyze and reflect upon their responses (Rich & Hannafin, 2009). Video reflection occurs when an individual films him or herself during an event and then watches the video to reflect upon one's actions (Maclean & White, 2007).

**Critical incident video reflections.** Although there are many ways to facilitate reflection, video reflection have become known as an effective tool for facilitating high quality reflection among teachers (Calandra et al., 2009). Video reflection allows teachers to receive immediate feedback and develop a deeper understanding of teaching practices (Calandra et al., 2009). Critical incident reflection is often combined with video reflection to allow for more holistic and accurate reflections on what is actually happening within the classroom (Brantley-Dias et al., 2008).

In a study completed by Brantley-Dias et al. (2008), eight teachers were asked to video tape a lesson. The participants watched their taped lessons and selected a critical incident to focus their reflections. A critical incident can be defined as an event or situation that marks a change or turning point (Harrison, 2010). The researcher took notes on the teacher reflections and interviewed each participant after the reflection. Brantley-Dias et al. (2009) found that when

teacher identify a critical incident to focus their reflection, they are able to reflect on the lesson from a variety of perspectives and use their reflection to inform future instruction or changes. This support previous research in other fields and in the field of education on the effectiveness of the critical incident technique to facilitate meaningful reflections (FitzGerald, Seale, Kerins, & McElvaney, 2007).

Calandra et al. (2009) completed a study that focused on the influence that a critical incident protocol and videotaped lessons had on teacher reflections. Six preservice teachers participated in this study. Three of the participants completed a critical incident reflection protocol on a selected critical event from the participant's memory. The other three participants completed the critical incident protocol after viewing a filmed lesson and selecting a critical incident from the video. Through the qualitative analysis of the teacher reflections and results from individual interviews, Calandra et al. (2009) found that the students that were able to view the specific event that had been videoed provided more detailed. This study also found that the participants with the video support reported making changes to their specific practice and increases in both self-esteem and teacher self-efficacy.

### **Co-teaching**

Co-teaching and collaboration are essential to the progress of the modern school system (Murawski & Hughes, 2009). Co-teaching has been suggested as a way to increase collaboration and ultimately teacher learning to support student achievement (Avalos, 2011). Co-teaching is defined as two different teachers working together and sharing the instruction of the students (Friend & Cook, 2010). Co-teaching is most commonly thought of as a relationship between a special education teacher and a general education teacher; however, this relationship can be altered or expanded to include other service providers (Paradini, 2006).

Due to the passing of No Child Left Behind (2001) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2014), co-teaching has become a popular way to ensure that students who require services through special education are educated in the least restrictive environment while specific needs are still being met (Idol, 2006). This focus was also continued through the Every Student Succeeds Act (2014) as described previously. The increasing number of diverse learners within a given classroom has also made co-teaching a necessary consideration. A partnership of professional peers with differing expertise seems to allow the pair to more easily and effectively gain the knowledge and skills needed to address the diverse learning needs within a specific classroom (Idol, 2006). The collaborative focus of co-teaching supports and strengthens teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities.

There are six different co-teaching models that pairs can use: (a) one teach/one observe, (b) station teaching, (c) parallel teaching, (d) alternative teaching, (e) team teaching, and (f) one teach/one assist (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010). These various models allow teachers to teach the specific content required while also addressing students' specific learning goals and needs within the general education classroom. One teach/one observe occurs when one teacher is leading and another teacher is observing or collecting data on a specific aspect of the classroom (Friend et al., 2010). Station teaching occurs when each teacher is teaching a small group a different lesson or completing a different activity (Friend et al., 2010). Parallel teaching is similar to station teaching, yet rather than completing different activities or lessons, both teachers are doing the same or very similar things with a smaller group (Friend et al., 2010). Alternative teaching is when one teacher is teaching a larger group of students and the other teacher has pulled a smaller group for a specific purpose such as intervention, enrichment, or assessments (Friend et al., 2010). Team teaching occurs when both

teachers are leading whole group instruction, and one teach one assists happens when one teacher is teaching the whole group and the other is assisting students in need. The most common co-teaching model is one teach/one assist in which the general education teacher led instruction and the special education teacher assisted (Mastropieri et al., 2005). The most successful pairs, however, use multiple co-teaching models and the roles within each model were flexible depending on the activity being completed and the specific teacher's strengths (Friend et al., 2010).

**Best Practices of Co-teaching.** The co-teaching and the co-teaching relationship is very complex (Walsh, 2012). Teachers in a co-teaching relationship must establish a rapport that allows them to develop trust in one another and how to utilize the strengths of both individuals (Friend & Cook, 2010). Co-teaching pairs do not need to have the same educational philosophies, however, an understanding of educational goals and ideas for the shared group of students must be discussed (Friend & Cook, 2010). This usually begins before the teachers interact with the students and continues throughout the co-teaching relationship. This rapport allows teachers to determine behavior and academic expectations and procedures (Friend & Cook, 2010).

Effective co-teaching requires the teachers to determine an instructional approach described above or some type of variation (Friend & Cook, 2010). Co-teachers vary the approach and the roles within the structure based on the student needs and the desired content. The teachers work together to maximize one another's expertise and knowledge within the classroom (Friend & Cook, 2010). Both teachers need to equally share the instructional responsibilities, and be seen as having equal power within the classroom (Friend et al., 2010).

Common planning time and having clearly defined times for planning and collaboration is also a key element of co-teaching. Time to plan has been identified as one of the major obstacles associated with co-planning (Mastropieri et al., 2005). Successful co-teaching pairs not only have defined times to plan, but also are able to use their time effectively (Brown, Howerter, & Morgan, 2013). How co-teaching pairs plan and use their time effectively seems to vary based on setting, level, and subject. The following strategies, however, have been identified as helpful supports: (a) clear understanding of outcomes; (b) defining roles; (c) reviewing materials prior to the meeting; and (d) flexibility (Dieker, 2001; Friend & Cook, 2010; Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007).

Assessment is also an important component to co-teaching and the co-planning process (Friend & Cook, 2010). Both teachers must be involved in developing and analyzing assessments. This information is specifically needed to ensure that both teachers understand the student's learning and can make informed decisions about the instruction provided.

**Co-teaching and students with disabilities.** Co-teaching has many positive impacts on students. Classes that are co-taught report having less behavior problems and better grades than classes with only one teacher (Wilson & Michaels, 2006). The ratio of teachers to students is also decreased, which allows the opportunity for more teacher-student interaction. Magiera, Smith, Zigmond, and Gebauer (2005) found that co-taught classes had significantly more teacher check-ins on student progress than classes that were not co-taught (Magiera et al., 2005). Students in co-taught classrooms have more opportunities for feedback and receive more one-on-one time with a teacher than those in solo-taught classrooms (Sweigart & Landrum, 2015). This is important to note because specific feedback also has a positive effect on student performance

(McDonough, 2005). In co-taught classrooms, student errors or misconceptions are identified more quickly than students who are not in co-taught classrooms (Tremblay, 2013).

Students in co-taught classrooms have better attendance records than students in single teacher classrooms (Friend et al., 2010). Wilson and Michaels (2006) found that the majority of secondary students with and without disabilities preferred being in co-taught classrooms because more help was available to them, more instructional models were used, and more skill development was possible. Co-teaching can also reduce stigmas associated with students with disabilities and/or who are ELLs (Idol, 2006). Classes that are co-taught allow for more interactions with non-identified peers (Saenz et al., 2005). This can help students develop much needed social language and communication skills.

Tremblay (2013) found that students in co-taught classrooms increased reading and writing scores more quickly than those who were in solo-taught classrooms. During their 2-year study, the achievement gap between students with and without learning disabilities in math decreased and overall math scores increased in the co-taught classroom (Tremblay, 2013). Reading and writing scores had the most significant increase for students with learning disabilities in the co-taught setting in this study (Tremblay 2013).

York-Barr et al.'s (2007) findings supported Tremblay's (2013) findings on reading achievement as well. In York-Barr et al.'s (2007) study significant gains were found in reading and math scores on end of the year state assessments for students who participated in the co-taught classrooms. These studies also showed that co-teaching increased math scores for students with disabilities, as well as students without disabilities (Tremblay, 2013; York-Barr et al., 2007). During York-Barr et al.'s (2007) 3-year analysis, it was also found that when students were removed from the co-taught setting and placed in a class with one teacher, the rate of

growth decreased for that individual student. This finding highlights the impact that co-teaching can have on individual students and controls for other confounding factors. The increased speed of growth with regards to reading and math is very important for students with special education needs because these are common areas of deficit and areas of focus for various federal mandates (i. e., No Child Left Behind (2001) and annual yearly progress). According to the U. S. Department of Education (2013), students with special education needs perform significantly below their non-identified peers on reading assessments, so the findings that indicate co-teaching having a positive impact on reading are especially important to consider.

**ELLs and co-teaching.** Due to the successes of the traditional co-teaching model, many schools or teachers have implemented co-teaching with an ELL teacher and a general education teacher to better meet the needs of students who require ELL services, which allows for ELLs to get more exposure to social and academic language and facilitates assimilation into the new culture (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). ELLs who were taught by a general education and ELL co-teaching pair, saw improvements in academic achievements (Bell & Baecher, 2012). For example, Causton-Theoris and Theoharis (2008) reported substantial increases in reading scores for ELL students who participated in co-taught classrooms. Due to the various findings, some school systems have completely eliminated the pull-out model to address the needs of ELLs and adopted a fully inclusive co-teaching model to provide services to ELLs (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010).

Co-taught classes also allow for more peer-assisted learning opportunities. In a study completed by Saenz et al. (2005), there was a significant increase in performance for ELLs with disabilities who participated in peer-assisted learning opportunities. Social interactions with general education peers is especially important for ELLs because it fosters the language

acquisition process (Azzolini et al., 2012). The more exposure an ELL gets to a new language, the more quickly he or she will develop the new language (Azzolini et al., 2012).

Co-teaching between general education and ELL teachers leads to more culturally responsive practices and the use of specific language learning strategies in the classroom routines (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006). Culturally responsive practices can be defined as using cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives to teach students more effectively (Gay, 2002). Co-teaching and collaboration is an especially appealing option for ELL teachers due to the various range of cultures and cultural topics that can arise with ELLs and ELLs with disabilities (Lazaraton, 2003). Because the diversity within classrooms is increasing, there is a growing need to consider new ways to meet the needs of all students. The impact that co-teaching can have on culturally responsive teaching practices is also important to consider because this is an area that many teachers have low self-efficacy (Paneque & Barbeta, 2006).

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2004), schools with the highest percentages of students that require ELL services are more likely to employ novice teachers who may not have explicit training to teach ELLs or students with disabilities. A study conducted by Feng and Sass (2013), showed that teachers who completed pre-service course work in special education reading and math instruction showed greater gains in reading and math scores. Feng and Sass (2013) also found that teachers with more than two years of experience produced greater gains in student achievement across content areas than teachers with zero to two years of experience. Because the preparation and expertise of an educator is an indicator of student success, it is important to consider how collaboration and co-teaching can compensate for this deficit (Feng & Sass, 2013).

### **Summary and Proposed Intervention**



Coleman (2011) described how there is a great need for collaboration and collaborative leadership in today's schools. Incorporating collaborative elements into new types of co-teaching will allow educators to become teacher leaders and better meet the needs of students with both special education and ELL needs. Co-teaching between special education and ELL teachers in different content areas will allow students to receive the appropriate services within the classroom setting. Teachers would be able to provide appropriate processing time and accommodate for language deficits (Swanson et al., 2012). Teachers could more easily connect instruction to students' native languages and cultures and provide explicit vocabulary instruction. This co-teaching relationship could strengthen teacher self-efficacy and promote teacher growth. The special education and ELL co-teaching pair would allow students to have more time to practice skills in the second language, which would increase the speed in which they become proficient (Azzolini et al., 2012).

The model of two specialized teachers teaming together could change the way teamed classes are structured. Teaming would no longer be considered exclusive to a special education and general education teacher. Various service providers could work together to provide students with the necessary services within the classroom setting regardless of the unique learning needs. By having ELL teachers working closely with special education teachers, classes could become more culturally and linguistically responsive and specific scaffolds could be easily built into the daily classroom structure. The IEP process could also be improved by developing a better understanding of the cultural and linguistic needs of specific students. Teachers would be able to more explicitly address IEP goals and ELL benchmarks to ensure that each student is making appropriate progress.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) explained how teachers commonly look to one another for support, advice, and/or assistance rather than going to an administrator. Co-teaching allows for teachers to be leaders in their field of expertise and deepen their professional knowledge. Incorporating new models of co-teaching can help to reorganize the traditional structure of schools, develop teacher leaders, strengthen teacher self-efficacy, and enhance student learning.

## Chapter 4

### Intervention for Co-Teachers of ELLs with Disabilities

The needs assessment and literature review showed that teachers have low self-perceptions when working with ELLs with disabilities (Paneque & Barbetta, 2006). Participants in my needs assessment did not believe that they had the skills or specific strategies to meet the needs of ELLs with disabilities. Collaboration has a positive influence on teacher's perceptions to meet the needs of ELLs with disabilities (Bruce et al., 2010). The needs assessment showed that general education teachers that collaborated with ELL teachers on a daily or weekly basis had higher perceptions of their abilities than teachers that did not collaborate at all or teachers that collaborated on a monthly basis.

Although there is substantial research on co-teaching, research specifically on ELL and special education co-teaching pairs is very limited (Huang et al., 2011; Paneque & Barbetta, 2006). Most research focuses on either a special education teacher co-teaching with a general education teacher or an ELL teacher co-teaching with a general education teacher (Scruggs et al., 2007).

The context of the intervention consisted of a special education and an ELL co-teaching pairing in a middle school English class of ELLs with disabilities. For the intervention, the researcher supported the co-teaching relationship and facilitated reflective conversations about co-teaching best practices and strategies for meeting the needs of ELLs with disabilities. The researcher met with the participants six times throughout the 12-week intervention for specific coaching sessions that focused on the following areas: (a) setting a foundation; (b) lesson planning; (c) co-teaching models; (d) co-assessing; and (e) solving conflict (Brown et al., 2013; Friend & Cook, 2010). The researcher also met with the participants to facilitate a critical

incidence video reflection. Although the researcher was instrumental in pairing the ELL teacher and special education teacher together, the focus of this intervention was on the coaching sessions and facilitated reflections.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the special education and ELL co-teaching pairing and teacher perceptions when working with ELLs with disabilities. The study also investigated the teacher perceptions of self-efficacy of this new co-teaching teacher pairing. This study expanded upon current research on co-teaching. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does collaboration within a new co-teaching pairing influence teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities?
2. How does reflection within a new co-teaching pairing influence teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities?
3. What are the ELL teacher's and special education teacher's perceptions of the efficacy of the new co-teaching pairing?
4. How has the study implementation adhered to or differed from the proposed implementation procedures?

### **Research Design**

For the intervention, the researcher met with a special education teacher and an ELL teacher that co-taught a middle school English class of ELLs with disabilities. During these coaching sessions or meetings, the researcher supported the co-teaching relationship and facilitate reflection. This study used an explanatory mixed methods research design (Creswell & Clark, 2011). This research design was chosen because it aligns with previous research surrounding co-teaching (e.g., Gray, 2009; Norton, 2013). An explanatory research design allows

the researcher to gain a more elaborate understanding of the phenomenon of the co-teaching experience, gain a deeper understanding of the quantitative results, and use the quantitative data to inform the interview questions (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

The qualitative data were collected using a single case design (Yin, 1993). The unit of analysis in this case study is the co-teaching pair. A single case study can be defined “as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin, 1984, p.23). Single case study design utilizes multiple sources of data to obtain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon or subject being investigated (Yin, 1993). Case study design allows researchers to explore individuals and organizations through the complex relationships, interventions, settings, and communities in which these individuals participate (Yin, 2003). Within the field of education, single case study design is considered a valuable research method for obtaining a holistic understanding of relationships and the influence of interventions (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

A case study was chosen because of the complex nature of co-teaching and the many variables associated with a co-teaching relationship (Magiera, Smith, Zigmond, & Gebauer 2005). The case study structure allowed the researcher to gain a more complete understanding of the influence of co-teaching on teacher perceptions (Wholey, Hatry, & Newcomer, 2010). Because there is limited research on the proposed new pairing of co-teaching, it is also a hope that this study provides a foundation or starting point for future research on ELL teacher and special education teacher co-teaching pairs. The quantitative data in this study were collected using a pre- and post-survey. The survey results served as a guide for the teacher interview questions.

## **Process Evaluation**

Fidelity can be defined as the ability to implement an intervention as it was intended to be implemented (Nelson, Cordray, Hulleman, Darrow, & Sommer, 2012). Fidelity is especially important to this intervention due to the numerous obstacles associated with co-teaching and the misconceptions surrounding the concept of co-teaching (Scruggs et al., 2007). Some of the major challenges associated with co-teaching include content knowledge, planning time, and teachers being unaware of the best practices related to the various co-teaching models (Scruggs et al., 2007). Dusenbury, Brannigan, Falco, and Hansen (2003) proposed five ways to measure fidelity: (a) adherence, (b) dose, (c) quality of delivery, (d) program differentiation, and (e) participant responsiveness. The intervention was considered to have high fidelity if the core components of the intervention are implemented correctly. The core components of this intervention are best practices of co-teaching, coaching sessions, and the structured reflections. The areas of focus are strongly connected to the inputs and outputs identified in the logic model (see Appendix D).

**Fidelity of implementation.** The researcher analyzed adherence, dose, quality of delivery, and participant responsiveness to determine the level of fidelity of implementation. Adherence refers to the level that the intervention includes the critical elements of the intervention (Dusenbury et al., 2003). Quality of delivery focuses on the provider effectiveness, while participant responsiveness refers to the degree that the participants are engaged and participating in the activities for the intervention (Dusenbury et al., 2003). The fidelity indicators are that the teachers effectively participate in a co-teaching relationship, coaching sessions, and the structured reflection. Effective participation of the participants in the intervention was determined by the participants co-teaching the specific class and their participation in the coaching sessions. The researcher did not analyze program differentiation because this indicator did not align with the intervention or research design.

Co-teaching has been described as a service delivery model in which two teachers share all responsibilities, including instructing, planning, and assessing of the classroom (Friend et al., 2010). To ensure that all participants have a strong understanding of what co-teaching is, the researcher met with the teacher participants prior to the intervention. During this meeting the researcher used the training materials from past research to ensure that the participants understand co-teaching best practices (Peacock, 2014). The researcher documented notes and reflections from all meetings in a researcher's journal. The researcher also recorded time spent in the coaching sessions. The teacher participants submitted biweekly reports (see Appendix E). In the biweekly reports, teachers were asked about the time spent co-planning and co-assessing. These two areas were focused on because they have been identified as essential components of co-teaching (Friend et al., 2010) and major obstacles to successful co-teaching (Scruggs et al., 2007). An indication of strong implementation fidelity was 45 minutes or more spent on co-planning a week. This time was chosen because it mirrors the time spent co-planning in previous studies and aligns with the schedule at the research setting (Brown et al., 2013). The researcher asked participants about the frequency of various co-teaching models, because in true co-teaching situations teachers use multiple models and vary the roles of each teacher within the model (Friend et al., 2010). Teacher reports also indicate how often teachers are using multiple models. Three or more models used a week would indicate high implementation fidelity (Friend et al., 2010).

The researcher kept a journal to document the time spent coaching and the topics discussed. Six meetings with the co-teaching pair to reflect and support the co-teaching relationship was considered high fidelity. Five meetings were considered medium fidelity and

four or less meetings were considered low fidelity. Each meeting had a minimum of 10 minutes spent on reflection. Both teachers must be present at each meeting to ensure fidelity.

Quality of delivery and participant responsiveness was assessed through the analysis of the researcher's journal and reflection sheets provided to the participants after each coaching session. A copy of this reflection sheet can be found in Appendix F.

### **Outcome Evaluation**

An explanatory mixed methods design was used because the quantitative data needed to be collected and analyzed first to help inform the qualitative data collection (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The researcher evaluated teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of the co-teaching pairing and the perceptions of teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities.

### **Method**

The context of this mixed methods study is a middle school in the eastern United States that serves 1,153 students in Grades 7 and 8. This section outlines the participants, measures, and the procedures of this proposed study.

### **Participants**

The context was selected based on convenience and the high population of ELLs with disabilities in the setting. The participants were included based on two criteria: experience co-teaching and a class schedule that allowed for the new co-teaching pairing. These inclusion criteria were developed during the 2015-2016 school year, during which eight pairs of teacher met the criteria. During the 2016-2017 school year, two pairs of teachers met the inclusion criteria. One pair was not able to participate due to a change in schedule prior to the beginning of the intervention. The participants in this study were two eighth-grade English teachers. The first teacher, Janelle, is certified in both special education and middle school English. She has 10



years of middle school teaching experience in various subject areas, yet all in special education. Janelle has been at the current setting for 3 years. Janelle is 35 and European American. The second teacher, Susan, is certified in middle school English and ELL and is in her second year of teaching middle school English. She was hired at the current context in December 2015. Susan is 24 and European American. Both teachers co-taught an eighth-grade English class during the 2015-2016 school year. Janelle was the special education teacher and Susan was the general education teacher in their previous class. Both teachers are monolingual.

## **Measures**

This study evaluated the influence of co-teaching on teacher perceptions of self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. Perceptions of co-teaching and teacher self-efficacy are the variables of focus for this study. This section describes the proposed instrumentation, to include: surveys, interviews, biweekly reports, and a researcher's journal.

**Surveys.** The *Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale* was used as the pre- and post-intervention measurement (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). This survey is frequently used in research on co-teaching and teacher self-efficacy (Gray, 2009) and is a valid and reliable measure of teacher self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). To align this tool with the needs of this study and the specific population, the word "student" was substituted with the term "ELLs with disabilities". For example, the question "How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students" was changed to "How much can you do to get through to the most difficult ELLs with disabilities?" This provided the researcher with information on the teachers' self-efficacy when specifically working with ELLs with disabilities. Questions pertaining exclusively to classroom management were also eliminated, as these questions did not directly connect with the research questions.

**Interviews.** Based on prior studies, survey findings from this study, and the needs assessment, semi-structured interview protocols were developed for the individual interview (Norton, 2013). The interview protocol and a list of guiding questions can be found in Appendix G, although these were subject to change based on the findings from the survey. During the interview teachers were asked questions such as, “How do you feel about teaching ELLs with disabilities?” and “How has this new co-teaching pairing influenced your thoughts about ELLs with disabilities?” to help answer the first research question. The researcher also asked questions such as “How do you feel about this new co-teaching pairing?” to answer the third research question.

**Biweekly reports.** Every 2 weeks the teacher participants submitted reports electronically through Google Forms. The first question on this form asked the participants about how long they have spent co-planning and co-assessing. The next section of the report consists of 24 questions from the “Are we really co-teachers?” survey (Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2004). The participants were prompted to check either yes or no for each question. This assessment was chosen because it has been used in previous co-teaching research (Norton, 2013) and is considered an accepted measure for evaluating the effectiveness of the co-teaching partnership (Cramer & Nevin, 2006). An example of the report can be found in Appendix E. The last section of the report asks teachers to record challenges and successes from the past week. These reports helped the researcher adjust the coaching sessions to best meet the needs of the participants and allowed the researcher to monitor the fidelity of the co-teaching pair.

**Researcher’s journal.** During the coaching sessions, the researcher took notes in a researcher’s journal to ensure that the coaching was being implemented with fidelity. In this journal the researcher recorded the final agenda and the time spent coaching. The researcher took

notes during the coaching session and recorded reflections after the coaching session took place. The researcher's journal was chosen as a measurement tool because it allows the researcher to monitor the fidelity of implementation and facilitates the development of the research (Banks-Wallace, 2008). The researcher's journal also allowed the researcher to obtain more information about the context of the specific discussions that the participants have during the coaching sessions as is critical in case study research (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

**Reflection sheet.** The reflection sheet consists of the following four questions: (a) was the coaching session effective? Why or why not? (b) do you feel like the coaching session connected to what you were doing in the classroom? Please explain your answer; (c) how has the reflection completed during this session influences your thinking about today's topic? and (d) how has your collaboration with one another influenced your thinking about today's topic? These questions allowed the researcher to measure the fidelity of implementation through participant report, and help provide data to answer research questions one and two. The reflection sheet can be found in Appendix F. Reflection sheets have been used in previous research to determine the fidelity of implementation (O'Donnell, 2008).

### **Procedure**

In the intervention, it was essential to make sure that the teacher participants had a deep and accurate understanding of the essential components of co-teaching best practices. A summary matrix, which outlines the alignment of the research questions, constructs, measures, and data analysis methods, can be found in Appendix H. When the researcher met with the participants prior to implementation, it was important for the researcher to clearly articulate the new co-teaching pairing to ensure all the participants had a common understanding. The researcher used the training material presented in previous research to ground and guide this

discussion (Peacock, 2016; see Appendix I). The presentation selected establishes a common understanding of what co-teaching is and the essential components of co-teaching. This presentation was chosen because it effectively explains co-teaching and has been used in a previous study (Peacock, 2016).

### **Co-Teaching Coaching Intervention**

The intervention took place over a 12-week period. A special education teacher and an ELL teacher co-taught a class of ELLs with disabilities. During this time, the researcher met with the pair to facilitate effective co-teaching, share best practices by facilitating discussions and activities that are focused on the best practices co-teaching, and prompting reflections on current practices. Six of the meetings were planned to last approximately 30 minutes. During these meetings, the researcher facilitated reflection for the co-teachers through self-assessment and prompting questions (Parkison, 2009). Probing questions and self-assessment were chosen to facilitate reflections among the teachers because these strategies were shown to be effective in promoting reflection and ultimately teacher change (Parkison, 2009). To further support the reflection of the participants, the researcher also facilitated a video reflection with the participants. As described in the previous chapter video reflections have shown to be effective in creating opportunities for deep reflections on classroom activities and teacher behavior. Video reflections have also been shown to help create teacher change (Calandra et al., 2009). This aligns with Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2002) interconnected model of professional growth. The proposed topics for the six coaching meetings were setting a foundation and building rapport, lesson planning, co-teaching models, co-assessing, and solving conflict. The current topics were chosen based on previous research and the major challenges associated with co-teaching (Friend & Cook; Brown et al., 2013; Walsh, 2012). The proposed agendas for each meeting can be found

in Appendix J. These meetings were subject to change, however, based on the needs of the participants. Table 4 is a timeline for the intervention.

Table 4

*Intervention Timeline*

Activity	Timeline	Duration	Description
Introductory Meeting with Co-teacher	March 30, 2017	60 minutes	The researcher met with the co-teaching pair. The research ensured there was a common understanding of co-teaching and addressed any misconceptions.
Biweekly Reports	April 3, 2017 April 20, 2017 May 4, 2017 May 18, 2017 June 1, 2017 June 15, 2017	About 10 minutes	The teachers filled out the report and submitted electronically.
Coaching Meetings	April 6, 2017 April 24, 2017 May 8, 2017 May 22, 2017 June 5, 2017 June 19, 2017	30 minutes	The researcher met with the co-teaching pair to support the co-teaching relationship and facilitate reflection.
Video Reflection	June 19, 2017	60 minutes	The co-teaching pair filmed themselves teaching. The researcher then met with the pair after school to watch video and reflect on the specific lesson or activity.

The coaching meetings focused on the challenges and the best practices of co-teaching that were elucidated in prior research (Peacock, 2016; Scruggs et al., 2007). The researcher met with the participants every two weeks during the intervention. This time lapse was chosen based on structures already established within the setting and to allow for the teachers to co-plan with one another prior to the meeting. The co-teachers used the biweekly reports to inform the discussion topics. The researcher also focused the discussion and activities around the obstacles associated with co-teaching (Scruggs et al., 2007). To facilitate meaningful reflection, the

researcher asked the teachers open-ended questions related to the activities in the classroom and ELLs with disabilities. For example, the researcher may begin by asking a very general question like “How do you think your class has gone over the past two weeks?” The researcher may then ask more specific questions such as “How did your teaching and instructional planning influence the needs of ELLs with disabilities?” The researcher also asked questions similar to the questions asked on pre-and post-survey to allow for the triangulation of data. This format was chosen because it allows the teacher participants to more deeply reflect on the instructional practices and their roles within the various activities (Parkison, 2009). A general script for the reflections can be found in Appendix K.

The date for the video reflection was chosen by the participants within the time frame of the intervention. The participants choose a specific date to align with the lessons or activities that they would like to film. After the participants filmed their desired lesson or activity, the researcher met with the pair after school to review the video and reflect using the Critical Incident Reflection Form (Calandra et al., 2009). This meeting was planned to last about an hour. The Critical Incident Reflection Form can be found in Appendix L.

### **Data Collection**

Data collected for this study included both qualitative and quantitative sources. A timeline of the data collection can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5

*Data Collection Timeline*

Activity	Timeline	Description
Pre-survey	March 30, 2017	The teachers took a paper and pencil survey.
Biweekly Reports	April 3, 2017 April 20, 2017 May 4, 2017 May 18, 2017 June 1, 2017 June 15, 2017	The teachers were prompted to submit this form via Google Forms.
Researcher's Journal	April 6, 2017 April 24, 2017 May 8, 2017 May 22, 2017 June 5, 2017 June 19, 2017	The researcher took notes during the coaching sessions.
Reflection Sheet	April 6, 2017 April 24, 2017 May 8, 2017 May 22, 2017 June 5, 2017 June 19, 2017	The teachers completed the reflection after each coaching session.
Post-survey	June 19, 2017	The teachers took a paper-and pencil survey.
Interview	June 21-25, 2017	The researcher conducted two interviews. One with each participant individually

**Surveys.** Teachers were given a paper and pencil pre-survey and had 2 days to complete and return the survey by delivering it to the researcher's office or by placing it in a sealed envelope in the researcher's mailbox. When the intervention was completed, the researcher gave the post-survey to the participants. This survey was paper and pencil and the teachers had two days to complete and return.

**Biweekly reports.** The teachers completed biweekly reports through Google Forms, a web-based survey tool, which the researcher sent out to the teachers. The teachers submitted the form at least 24 hours before the coaching session. The researcher sent the participants calendar reminders to complete the reports.

**Reflection sheet.** The reflection sheet was given to the participants at the end of each meeting. The reflection sheet was paper and pencil and the participants had 24 hours to return the reflection to researcher. The participants returned the reflections by handing them to the researcher or putting the form in a sealed envelope in the researcher's mailbox.

**Researcher's journal.** The researcher took notes in a researcher's journal during the coaching sessions. After each session the researcher also recorded reflections and responses. The researcher's journal was used to measure the fidelity of implementation for the intervention. The researcher reviewed the notes taken during each session to ensure that teachers were provided with opportunities to reflect.

**Interviews.** After the post-survey had been administered, the researcher conducted two interviews with the participants over a week period. The two interviews were conducted individually with each participant. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Each interview was semi-structured and last about 45-60 minutes, which aligns with previous research (Gray, 2009; Norton, 2013). The interviews were conducted during the last period of the day or after school.

## **Data Analysis**

The quantitative data from the survey were analyzed separately from the qualitative data. The quantitative data analysis helped inform the qualitative data collection. The researcher



utilized a conventional content analysis approach to analyze the qualitative data collected (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

**Survey.** Because of the limited sample size, I focused on changes from the pre- to post-survey for each participant. I compared each question and look for areas of change as well as areas with no change. The overall mean scores were calculated for the pre- and post-survey for each participant. I also looked at the mean score for the two sub-categories within this survey: Efficacy in Student Engagement and Efficacy in instructional strategies.

**Biweekly reports.** The biweekly reports were used to help the researcher plan for the different coaching sessions. The researcher read over the teacher responses and review the current agendas for the coaching sessions. The researcher then determined the adjustments needed for the coaching session agenda.

**Reflection sheet.** The researcher reviewed the teacher reflection responses after each session to help inform future sessions. At the end of the intervention, the researcher reviewed the responses again by reading and re-reading what the participants wrote. The researcher used conventional content analysis to code and categorize the results (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The researcher reviewed and reflected on the responses to develop categories and subcategories. The researcher repeated this process to verify the findings and ensured that no other categories or subcategories arise. The researcher then determined key themes and connections to address the research questions.

**Interview.** The data collected from the interview were analyzed using a conventional content analysis approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the social reality is a scientific way (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Conventional content analysis is also frequently used when limited research

exists on the specific phenomena being studied (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This approach to data analysis aligns with the research question and the goal to develop a deeper understanding of this new co-teaching pairing. The researcher read and re-read the transcripts to fully familiarize one's self with the data. The researcher then began coding the data by using a highlighter when re-reading to help identify critical components and potential relationships. Once key concepts had been identified the researcher re-read the data and recorded her thoughts to begin to develop labels and subcategories. The researcher re-coded the data using the labels determined and sorted the various labels into sub-categories. The researcher then made connections between the concepts and sub-categories that had been identified and sorted the data into larger categories or themes. The researcher then analyzed the major categories and made connections to the research questions within this study. The researcher reviewed the major categories or themes and found exemplars for each category.

**Researcher's journal.** The researcher reviewed the notes taken before each session to make changes as necessary. At the end of the intervention the researcher read and re-read the notes taken to fully become immersed in the data. A conventional content analysis approach was utilized to analyze the researcher's journal (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The researcher then re-read the journal again to specifically derive codes from the data. During this process, the researcher highlighted words or phrases that seem to capture a thought or process. The researcher then took notes on the text to record the initial thoughts. Through this process, labels for the various codes were developed and codes began to be organized into subcategories. The researcher re-read the data again to determine any connections between sub-categories and developed categories or themes for the data. The researcher then defined each category and found exemplars for each

category to prepare to report the findings. The timing of each coaching session was also evaluated to ensure that the coaching occurred for the appropriate amount of time.

### **Trustworthiness and Credibility**

Trustworthiness can be described as establishing that the findings of the study are (a) confirmable, (b) dependable, (c) transferable, and (d) credible (Guba, 1981). Trustworthiness ensures that the reader of the study can trust the findings or results (Brantlinger, Jimenez, Klingner, Pugach, & Richardson, 2005). Credibility focuses on ensuring that the study is actually measuring what was intended (Shenton, 2004). With case studies, it is essential that the data collected and analyzed is both trustworthy and credible (Baxter & Jack, 2008). To ensure that the study is both credible and trustworthy, the researcher first confirmed that the essential components of a case study are present (Russell et al., 2005). The essential components of a case study are appropriate (a) research design, (b) sampling, (c) data collection, (d) data analysis, and (e) research questions (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The researcher also used various accepted strategies to ensure credibility and trustworthiness (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The multiple data sources allowed for the triangulation of data. The comparison between the different data sources increased the overall quality of the data (Baxter & Jack, 2008). As explained previously, the researcher employed a double coding strategy and the data was read through multiple times to minimize the possibility for errors or omissions. The researcher self-reflect using the researcher's journal. Member checks were also employed after the participant interviews to make sure that the participant answers and feelings were accurately depicted. In the next section, the researcher also explains her role within the setting and her background to self-disclose and increase the transparency of the study (Brantlinger et al., 2005). Once data were collected, the researcher also reported the findings using thick and rich descriptions to ensure that the findings and overall

narrative are clear (Flyvbjerg, 2006). These strategies are essential to ensuring the credibility and trustworthiness of the study, which is essential to the overall success of a case study (Yin, 2003).

### **Researcher Positionality**

As an insider of the setting in which the research was conducted, it is important to explain my role. This helps the readers to determine if the findings are valid and helps to neutralize researcher bias (Unluer, 2012). I taught at the proposed study setting for 5 years as a special education teacher. During this time, I taught English, various intervention courses, and civics. I worked with many different co-teachers and was a demonstration classroom for co-teaching for the state. I am now an assessment coach and resource teacher. I work with the collaborative learning teams within the setting and support teachers with implementing a new instructional model that focuses on student-directed learning. I am also responsible for organizing and administering the major testing in the setting.

My role is non-evaluative and I am frequently asked to go into classrooms or meetings to provide support to teachers. Although I support all the teachers within the setting, the participants are not on the collaborative learning team that I directly support regularly. I was previously in a department with one of the participants and have collaborated with her to support students that we had in common.

As an insider, it is important for me to record my responses and reactions to limit potential bias and ensure that I am able to appropriately analyze the data (Krieger, 1985). I did this by recording my thoughts in the researcher's journal, as previously explained. Reviewing the researcher's journal throughout the process supported my data analysis and allow me to connect my reactions with the data collected (Krieger, 1985).

## Chapter 5

### Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents the implementation, findings, and discussion of this study, as well as limitations and implications for future practice and research.

#### **Process of Implementation**

The intervention took place over 12 weeks, from April 2017 to June 2017, with a special education and ELL teacher who were co-teaching an eighth-grade English class of ELLs with disabilities. During the intervention period, the researcher facilitated six coaching sessions and a video reflection with the co-teaching pair. The participants completed biweekly reports at least one day prior to each coaching session and a pre- and post-survey (see Table 4). The introductory meeting, coaching sessions, and video reflection are described in more detail below. The following section describes how the researcher implemented the intervention for this study. The researcher made some adjustments to the original coaching session agendas, as the co-teaching dyad had established a strong relationship prior to the intervention; the specific adjustments will be explained in the Discussion section.

#### **Introductory Meeting**

The researcher scheduled an introductory meeting with the participants to provide a detailed overview of the intervention and ensure a common understanding of co-teaching and the co-teaching models, using materials from Peacock (2014). This meeting occurred during the participants' planning period and lasted about an hour. The researcher also reviewed a PowerPoint presentation to describe co-teaching and provide a brief overview of the co-teaching models (see Appendix I). At the end of the session, the teachers were given time to ask questions.

## **Session 1**

During the first session, the researcher facilitated a window and mirror activity in which participants write or draw what a perfect scenario looks and sounds like, including their own role in the scenario. During the activity, the teachers revisited their personal classroom goals and views regarding effective co-teaching. In the window portion of the activity, researcher prompted the participants to think about and record what a perfect co-taught classroom would look like. The teachers shared their responses with each other. In the mirror portion of the activity, the researcher prompted the participants to think about and record their role within a perfect co-taught classroom. In the mirror activity, teachers typically focus on a perceived area of weakness, which provides an additional opportunity for self-reflection as it is not shared with the larger group.

Next, the teachers independently completed a teacher preference survey, in which each teacher recorded their opinions on classroom policies and procedures, teaching preferences, behavior management, grading, and communication. Next, teachers worked together to record their combined preferences and expectations for their shared classroom (see Appendix M). The researcher helped to facilitate a follow-up conversation by asking probing questions such as “Do your individual hopes align with what you would like to see in your shared classroom?” or “Why did you record that specific hope?” Many of the participants’ answers related to teaching preferences, such as feedback expectations and classroom management, were identical. Next, the researcher prompted the teachers to explain their co-teaching pasts and reflect upon how these past experiences influence their current co-teaching practices. This discussion used the majority of the time scheduled for the session. Both teachers discussed struggles with co-teaching in the past, such as challenges they encountered with previous co-teachers. The pair also expressed

excitement around their current co-teaching pairing. The participants shared that they enjoyed working with one another and were looking forward to focusing on their ELLs with disabilities.

The session ended with the researcher facilitating a reflection of the past week (see Appendix K). The pair discussed the progress of their ELLs with disabilities and different strategies that had been effective. Janelle was sick the previous week, so much of their collaboration had to take place over the phone or through Google Docs. At the end of the session, the researcher asked if the pair had any questions. Both participants asked for more information on the co-teaching models discussed during the introductory meeting.

## **Session 2**

During the second session, the researcher spent the majority of the time explaining the different co-teaching models and the various uses of these models. The session began with the researcher expanding upon what was discussed during the introductory meeting. The researcher first asked the participants to share what co-teaching models they used most frequently, their comfort levels with the various models, and their prior experiences. The researcher then provided the participants with a visual representation of each co-teaching model and examples of how each model could be utilized within their content (see Appendix N). For example, the researcher discussed the strengths of the parallel teaching model and explained how this model can be effective when introducing a challenging topic such as inferencing, which was selected because it was an upcoming topic for the participants' students. The researcher then showed the participants short video clips of co-teachers using the various models and asked the participants to apply their new knowledge of co-teaching models to upcoming lessons (Brewer, 2013). The researcher modeled this by sharing pre-made lessons and providing a co-teaching model that could be used within each portion of the lesson. The researcher then instructed the pair to think

of an upcoming lesson and what co-teaching models might best support the given activity and student understanding. The teachers shared that, prior to the intervention, they tended to use mostly team teaching and alternative teaching. Both teachers expressed an interest in using parallel teaching in their classrooms, so the researcher helped the pair create a plan to incorporate this model into an upcoming lesson on supporting inferences.

The session concluded with a reflection on the past weeks. The teachers discussed challenges with the end of the quarter, teacher absences, and many students being out due to a local political protest. Janell shared, “we respect and support why many of our student in the class did not come to school. However, this was definitely a major challenge because this class is so impacted by the speed in which they learn and process new information” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 2).

### **Session 3**

The topic of the third session was overcoming conflict. Both participants shared having conflict with co-teachers in the past, and Susan was currently having a conflict with another co-teacher. The researcher asked the participants to explain past conflicts and their perceived reasons for these conflicts. Janelle and Susan shared frustration about not having had training on how to overcome conflicts prior to becoming a co-teacher. Neither participant had experienced co-teaching during their student teaching experiences. The participants also shared that they have not had any conflicts with one another. The researcher then facilitated a discussion about strategies the pair could have used to overcome conflict or disagreements. The pair came up with a list of preferred strategies based on the discussions within the coaching sessions and their individual experiences.



The researcher then had the pair reflect individually through written responses to the prompt “How do I influence student learning?” and facilitated a collaborative reflection about the past weeks. Janelle and Susan discussed how much progress their class of ELLs with disabilities was making, a class project that was going well, and their anxiety with the upcoming state assessments.

#### **Session 4**

The fourth session began with a brief opening activity in which the teachers explained their best lesson or activity. The researcher then asked the participants to explain their planning process. The planning focus during this session connected with the importance of planning and questioning that emerged during the previous discussion on overcoming conflict. The researcher then facilitated planning for the upcoming unit by asking questions such as “Why did you select that activity?” and “How will you know if the student understand this topic?” The researcher also supported the teachers with selecting co-teaching models based on the activity and needs of the students. For example, the teachers shared that some of their students did not understand how to make an appropriate assertion, so the researcher suggested that the pair use the alternative teaching model to address this need. The researcher selected this model because it allows teachers to provide targeted instruction to a small group, while the majority class participates in an extension activity (Friend, 2010). Janelle and Susan discussed the importance of assessment within their planning process and then worked together to create different activities and scaffolds specifically for their class of ELLs with disabilities. The researcher asked the pair about the past 2 weeks and prompted the pair to discuss challenges and successes.

#### **Session 5**

The topic of the fifth session was student assessments. Prior to this session, the researcher asked the teachers to bring sample student assessments to the meeting. The researcher asked the teachers to explain their current assessment practices and then analyze and evaluate the student assessments that they had brought to the meeting. The researcher facilitated this analysis and reflection by asking prompting questions such as, “Why did you make that decision?” and “How will instruction be altered based on these results?” As the teachers answered these questions, the conversation naturally shifted to planning based on the assessment results. The pair planned various activities for the following week and developed a new assessment that aligned with their activities.

The session ended with the guided reflection of the previous 2 weeks. The teachers shared successes with their small group instruction and discussed how tired many students seemed after state assessments and with the end of the year approaching. The pair seemed excited to implement their new assessment and specifically allow time to celebrate the accomplishments of the students in their class. The researcher asked the pair about the reduced variety of co-teaching models that the pair used in the past week, as noted in the biweekly report. The pair shared that they relied mostly on station teaching to individualize review for the state assessment.

## **Session 6**

The sixth session focused on reflection and planning for the upcoming year. After a brief summary of the previous session, the researcher asked the pair how the activities and changes they planned were implemented within their class of ELLs with disabilities during the past two weeks. Janelle and Susan reflected on the new assessment they had created. Susan shared that “even though this was meant to be a summative assessment, I really think they learned while

completing this, and it showed us much more than we would have gotten from a multiple choice test” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 10). Janelle also stated that, “the students really seemed to struggle with symbolism before, but this assessment seemed to really help them connect this concept to real life” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 9). The pair discussed changes they planned to make to this unit for the upcoming year.

The researcher ended this session by facilitating a reflection on the overall coaching sessions as well as their time co-teaching a class of ELLs with disabilities. The participants said that they enjoyed having the specific time to reflect and think about their co-teaching decisions. For example, Susan stated, “I liked having some structures and carving out time to be really purposeful in our thinking on how the week has gone”. The researcher also prompted the teachers to discuss how the intervention and their collaboration would influence their work next year.

### **Video Reflection**

The pair filmed a co-taught lesson in mid-June, which was 10 weeks into the 12-week intervention. Janelle, Susan, and the researcher met after school one week later to watch the video and reflect. Prior to watching the video, the researcher shared the Critical Incident Reflection Protocol (Calandra et al., 2009), which was used to facilitate the discussion. The researcher explained the concept of a critical incident using the description provided by Calandra et al. (2009) and allowed time for the participants to ask questions. The participants were instructed to select a critical incident while reviewing the video lesson.

During the lesson review, the pair immediately and spontaneously began discussing and reflecting on what they were observing. The researcher encouraged each teacher to record notes while watching to allow each participant to process individually and support the future reflective

conversation. After the video was over, the researcher asked the participants to share the critical incident they selected. Janelle wanted to focus on the formatting directions they gave and Susan wanted to focus on how they responded to the student confusion after the formatting directions had been given.

The researcher reviewed the critical incident protocol by reading the directions out loud, and the participants decided that they would focus on the response to the directions. Susan initially selected the student responses after the directions and Janelle selected the actual delivery of the directions. Susan agreed to focus on the directions given because the students' reactions would be discussed through the protocol. The directions that participants provided was agreed upon as the critical incident to focus on during this reflection. The researcher ended the reflection by having the participants commit to changes they could make within future lessons.

### **Findings**

Qualitative findings, collected through the biweekly reports, reflection sheets, researcher's journal and interviews, are organized by research question (see Table 6). Descriptive statistics were used to describe the quantitative survey data and supplement the qualitative data.

Table 6

*Chapter Sections and Research Questions*

Chapter Section	Research Question
Collaboration and Self-Efficacy	How does collaboration within a new co-teaching pairing influence teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities?
Reflection and Self-Efficacy	How does reflection within a new co-teaching pairing influence teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities?
Perceived Efficacy of the New Co-Teaching Pairing	What are the ELL teacher's and special education teacher's perceptions of the efficacy of the new co-teaching pairing?
Implementation and Fidelity	How has the study implementation adhered to or differed from the proposed implementation procedures?

**Collaboration and Self-Efficacy (RQ1)**

As explained in the previous chapter, participants were surveyed to measure teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale identifies an overall score as well as two sub-scores (i.e., Student Engagement and Instructional Strategies) to provide more targeted and detailed description of teacher self-efficacy. The two sub-scores were Student Engagement and Instructional Strategies. The results showed that both participants' self-efficacy increased after the intervention. Janelle's average score increased from 7.7 to 8.8 and Susan's score increased from 6.45 to 8.1 (see Table 7).

Table 7

*Pre- and Post-Survey Results*

Means	Susan's Pre-Survey	Susan's Post-Survey	Janelle's Pre-Survey	Janelle's Post-Survey
Overall	6.45	8.1	7.75	8.8
Efficacy in Student Engagement	5.7	8	7.5	8.7
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies	7.37	8.38	8	9

**Effective co-planning.** Although Susan's co-teaching experience was limited, she felt strongly about the importance of co-teaching and collaborating with her colleagues. Susan stated that two critical components of collaboration between co-teachers are the relationship and planning: "Planning, for me, has always been the root of co-teaching conflicts" (Researcher's Journal, p. 4). Susan shared that planning with another person allowed her to consider a variety of perspectives and ensure that the lessons developed were specifically geared towards the ELLs with disabilities in the co-taught class. Susan shared that, "Our collaboration made me think about the lesson in different ways and enhanced some of my ideas" (Reflection Sheets, p. 2). Susan discussed how her many conversations with Janelle allowed them to tweak and enhance their lessons. Because Janelle and Susan were together for the majority of the day, Susan explained that they were always having conversations to reflect and adjust their activities to best meet the needs of their students. When explaining these conversations, Susan stated: "When we have these discussions, we come up with the best lessons because they are more thought out and geared towards the specific needs of the students" (Researcher's Journal, p. 4).

Susan also discussed how she benefited from hearing Janelle's ideas and ways of approaching different tasks. Susan shared:

We just can't possibly think of everything on our own. Janelle will suggest a new way to scaffold or tweak something we came up with to better support the students and connect with their experiences and it will make the lesson so, so much better (Researcher's Journal, p. 6).

Susan gave numerous examples of times when Janelle changed Susan's thinking and suggested changes that enhanced the quality of the lesson and her feelings surrounding a specific lesson. For example, Susan discussed a conversation between her and Janelle after a decision had been made about an assessment by the department. Susan explained, "When we were planning, we were, like, that's not something that we can do, so we came up with a more creative, symbolic assignment that tested the same standards" (Individual Interview, p. 2). Susan explained the many of the challenges ELLs with disabilities face with traditional assessments and stated, "We drew on the things they've already read and the things we've already done in class, and used that to assess those standards" (Individual Interview, p. 2). This example shows how Susan made changes and altered instruction to more closely align with the student needs through collaboration with her co-teacher.

Janelle frequently discussed the planning process with Susan when discussing collaboration. When Janelle was asked about collaboration, she often described planning with Susan or past co-teachers. When speaking of Susan, her Janelle explained, "collaboration allows us to design instruction specifically to meet the need of our dually identified students [i.e., ELLs with disabilities]" (Reflection Sheets, p. 4). Janelle also shared that "With the population of students you have in a co-taught class and, especially with our dually identified class, you can't just do what was done last year. We need to fully design out lessons together" (Researcher's

Journal, p. 4). During the coaching sessions, the participants were able to share their planning process of planning and discuss their specific student needs.

Both Janelle and Susan mentioned the importance of assessments and collaboration when planning for ELLs with disabilities. Susan explained, “With our ELLs with disabilities, it is really important to assess them prior to instruction. This is usually informal, but we have learned that this is really important. They usually need a lot of support with background knowledge” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 6). Janelle shared that, “Talking through assessments coming up for the dually identified [ELLs with disabilities] class was helpful for an external processor [i.e., someone who thinks through talking and discussing topics]” (Reflection Sheets, p. 4). Janelle explained that many instructional decisions were made after analyzing assessment results together. When discussing a collaboratively planned lesson, Janelle stated, “we decided who would get a form with some sentence frames [a method of scaffolding when students are provided with parts of a sentence] based on our formative assessments” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 10).

Janelle expressed frustration at the lack of collaboration between the special education and ELL departments in their school, which aligns with the findings from the needs assessment. Janelle shared that she was able to “rely on her co-teacher’s knowledge of how to work with students that had English as their second language” (Individual Interview, p. 2). Janelle also stated, “When we are meeting during our planning period, talking through things, I know that she brought how to work with ELL students and I brought how to work with students with disabilities, and we are combining forces” (Individual Interview, p. 2). Again, this illustrated how collaboration allowed Janelle to overcome a personal perceived weakness, thus having a positive influence on her self-efficacy.



Janelle shared that she taught a class similar to the intervention class during the previous school year and explained that her previous co-teacher did not have any time to plan with her. “That class was pretty firmly on my shoulders” (Individual Interview, p. 7). Janelle reported that she would develop lessons and her co-teacher would occasionally add scaffolding techniques. Janelle explained, “We would try to cobble it all together as much as we could. I think our class suffered for that” (Individual Interview, p. 7).

Conversely, Janelle expressed positive feelings about the intervention class. When asked about her collaboration with Susan, Janelle stated that the ELLs with disabilities class, “got me at my A-game [best effort] at all times” (Individual Interview, p. 7). Janelle also discussed how her collaboration with Susan allowed her to feel like she had support and someone with whom to create new ideas, explaining, “It’s nice to have the support there” (Individual Interview, p. 7) and that, “I never do my best work by myself” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 6). These statements seem to emphasize the importance Janelle places on effective collaboration and the role that collaboration plays in her self-efficacy.

**Interpersonal relationships.** Both Janelle and Susan spoke highly of their co-teaching relationship and collaboration with one another. Janelle explained that she and Susan have “similar demeanor and teaching styles” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 1). Susan also described their current relationship as “work wives”, meaning that their relationship was similar to a marriage (Researcher’s Journal, p. 1). Janelle stated that she and Susan work “in tandem” to meet their student’s needs and even “spend more time with one another than their own husbands” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 4). Susan and Janelle explained that although they first met as co-teachers and developed a professional relationship, they have also since developed a friendship outside of school. Janelle stated, “Susan and I are friends and we became friends through being

co-teachers. I think that says a lot about us” (Individual Interview, p. 10). This statement highlights how the two participants had a very strong interpersonal relationship. This is important to note because previous research has shown that building relationship and establishing rapport is often an obstacle to effective co-teaching (Friend & Cook, 2010; Mastropieri et al., 2005).

During Session 3, the pair discussed potential ways to resolve conflict among co-teachers. Although both teachers could explain conflicts with other co-teachers, they struggled to identify a conflict between themselves. Susan explained “I think we don’t have any real conflicts because we trust each other and don’t allow ego to get in the way” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 4). Janelle continued by explaining “When we disagree on something, we usually just ask a question or explain our thinking” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 4). Susan also shared “I think this helps to avoid conflict because we both have ownership of what happens in that classroom when the students are there” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 4).

Susan’s interpersonal relationships influenced her feelings of her ability to collaborate and reflect with her co-teacher. Susan expressed positive thoughts around collaboration, co-teaching, and reflections with Janelle, such as: “Co-teaching, in general, has been one of the best experiences that I feel like I’ve had as a teacher” (Individual Interview, p. 2), yet also expressed having difficulties with another co-teacher she was working with during the intervention time period. Susan considered the relationship with her other co-teacher to be ineffective, and often compared it to the relationship she and Janelle had. Susan believed that relationships, trust, and having similar goals were essential to a successful collaboration or co-teaching relationship. Susan explained that she and the other co-teacher did not have similar teaching styles, but that she and Janelle had very similar styles. During a coaching session, Susan shared:

Respect is essential for co-teaching; this allows us to share the workload. The respect and trust I have with Janelle is different than what I have with my other co-teacher. I think this is one of the reasons that the workload is not shared in my other co-teaching partnership (Researcher's Journal, p. 3).

Susan also often references "teaching style" and refers to this term as essential for successful collaboration and co-teaching. When asked to explain this term further, Susan explained that teaching style "is about someone's teaching philosophy and how they interact with the kids" (Researcher's Journal, p. 5). Janelle later elaborated on this by saying, "We share values and we share temperaments. Above everything was always our students, more than being right, more than what our ideals are. Everything was about what our students needed" (Individual Interview, p. 8). Susan also stated, "Our teaching style and our goals are the same, which makes co-teaching together easy and fun" (Researcher's Journal, p. 2). When asked about her pairing with Janelle during the interview, Susan explained:

Our personalities definitely mesh well, and we're both very relational, and that's an important part of teaching to us. We have very similar teaching styles, where we both believe that if a student is not comfortable with you in your class, they're not really going to learn anything...so we were able to build relationships together with students, which makes them more comfortable in the classroom. It makes them want to learn (Individual Interview, p. 7).

The strong and positive relationship between Janelle and Susan not only helped to facilitate effective collaboration, but also supported classroom experimentation. Susan stated that "it's easier to do stations and parallel teaching, because we trusted each other" (Individual Interview, p. 8). Trust is important within a co-teaching relationship because sharing all the classroom

responsibilities requires that each co-teacher trust the other to complete and carry out the necessary tasks. Janelle highlighted this by stating:

I need to be able to trust the person that I'm collaborating with because of how we gather data and because of how we formatively assess.... Even though we have 90-minute class, I don't have the time to sit down and have that one-on-one conversation with all of them [students]. But even just splitting the class, since I trust my co-teacher, I can say, 'Okay, you take that group and I can take this group.' I trust that she's getting the same types of feedback and we're asking in the same way (Interview, p. 12)

Janelle also expressed positive feelings about Susan and her abilities throughout the coaching sessions. Janelle frequently stated: "how much I love working with Susan" (Reflection Sheets, p. 3). Janelle described herself as being student centered and goal oriented. Janelle also explained that she believes her goals align with Susan's goals and this contributes to their success as a pair. During a coaching session, Janelle stated that, "Susan really helped me remember what is most important in our classroom" (Reflection Sheets, p. 3)

When asked about collaboration, Janelle first stated, "obviously, I adore my co-teacher" (Individual Interview, p. 1). She continued by stating, "I need to be able to trust the person that I'm collaborating with" (Individual Interview, p. 2). Janelle explained that trust is important due to the formative assessment and being able to not feel "judged" when new ideas were suggested or changed (Researcher's Journal, p. 4). Janelle explained that with some of her past co-teachers, "I felt judged when I brought something else [new ideas or suggestions]" (Researcher's Journal, p. 5). This is similar to Susan's experience with her other co-teacher: "Sometimes comments from my other co-teacher sound really judgy which puts me on the defensive" (Researcher's Journal, p. 5).

Janelle, like Susan, viewed trust and open-mindedness as important components to effective collaboration. Janelle stated:

In my opinion, my role is to come to the collaborative meeting with an open mind, not getting stuck in something, taking my ego out of things and being ready with my best ideas and also not being afraid to be told, ‘Well, that idea is great but it’s a little too big’ and accepting that (Individual Interview, p. 6).

Janelle and Susan discussed their relationship frequently throughout the coaching sessions and individual interview. Both participants shared similar statements about the connection between a strong relationship and effective collaboration.

**“Growing together”: Enactment of salient outcomes.** During the individual interview, Susan explained that:

I’m not naïve enough to believe that I know everything and do everything the best way or think about things the only way. So getting to work with somebody else, especially Janelle, she brings a new perspective. . . . We can just kind of tell different nuances like when something’s going wrong in the lesson or when something’s going right in the lesson. We just work so well together, and that’s not something you get with just collaborating outside of the classroom (Individual Interview, p. 2).

Susan’s willingness to learn and openness to try new strategies from her co-teacher is an indicator of high self-efficacy (Dixon et al., 2014). Susan also shared how she feels like she has grown as a teacher and her ability to support ELLs with disability has increased. When asked how collaboration influences her growth, Susan responded, “I think everything. Janelle makes me a better teacher because we’re growing together” (Individual Interview, p. 5). This is also supported by the survey data, as Susan’s overall mean score increased from a 6.45 to an 8.1.

Within the Student Instruction sub-category, which focused on self-efficacy when meeting the instructional needs of ELLs with disabilities, Susan's score increased from a 7.37 to an 8.38.

Susan discussed various changes in her own beliefs and abilities to support ELLs with disabilities due to her co-teaching and collaboration with Janelle. Susan explained that she feels a "lot more comfortable than I felt in the beginning of the year. I think that working with Janelle and the strategies that we use in our team taught class, I think that I was able to better understand and implement them in our class of ELLs with disabilities" (Individual Interview, p. 8). This statement shows how collaborating with Janelle allowed Susan to feel more comfortable in the classroom and more willing to implement new strategies. Susan also shared how Janelle helped her to identify her personal strengths and was able to "pull on those [strengths] and help me grow through that" (Individual Interview, p. 4). Susan's description of how she benefited from the collaboration shows how the co-teaching pairing increased her perceived abilities and self-efficacy.

Janelle discussed that she tends to have a lot of big ideas, and sometimes struggles to fill in all the details. Janelle stated, "Susan is also really good at asking me questions about my ideas which helps me flush [sic] things out a little bit better and really reflect on my reasoning for suggesting or doing something" (Researcher's Journal, p. 6). This shows how Janelle is able to justify her thinking and develop more thought out plans through her collaboration with Susan.

### **Reflection and Self-Efficacy (RQ2)**

The coaching sessions provided a structured time for the participants to reflect on their lessons and current practices. Reflection was a critical component of the planning and the collaborative process for both Susan and Janelle.

**Structured reflection within coaching sessions.** Susan shared that reflections are “how we make all our decisions” (Individual Interview, p. 2). She continued by saying, “Everything is a reflection of ‘okay, did this go as well as we wanted it to go?’ Do we need to provide some more support in this area or on this topic?” (Individual Interview, p. 2-3). Susan viewed her reflection during the coaching sessions as essential to their instructional decisions. Susan explained, “Everything came from reflection: Are they where we want them to be? If not, what can we do to get them there?” (Individual Interview, p. 3).

Susan especially seemed to connect with the feedback that she and Janelle provided for each other:

That [feedback] is one of my favorite things that we do, because when it does happen, it improves your self-efficacy or confidence, and sometimes I just don’t think that something is going well, and she will have thought that it went really well, or vice versa, so having that feedback and the reflection, I think, is something that we’re just generally pretty good at (Individual Interview, p. 9).

Feedback is an important component, as it is part of the external domain discussed in the interconnected model of professional growth. According to Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002), the connection between the external domain and reflection creates a change environment that promotes professional growth. Susan continued to explain how reflection allowed her to evaluate previous actions and use this information to inform future practice. Susan stated:

Reflection makes you better, and it gives you an opportunity to say this worked, this didn’t work, which means the next time, you’re going to start doing the things that worked, which makes you a stronger teacher and more competent because you have done something and you know it works (Individual Interview, p. 10).

Susan's description of reflection and receiving feedback shows how this process influenced professional changes and build her self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities, which aligns with the interconnected model of professional growth. For example, during a coaching session the participants discussed an upcoming activity to help students make inferences. The pair started with a graphic organizer, and after they reflected on their students' needs, the team changed the organizer to present the more concrete task first. During this reflecting and planning process, Janelle stated, "So here's what I'm picturing, we could have them use the graphic organizer to answer questions about the text" (Researcher's Journal, p. 6). Susan responded by saying:

We are asking them to read, write, speak and think critically. This is a really hard skill and really hits on areas of difficulty for this group. Maybe we could start off with having them use this organizer with a picture, so we are focusing on the skill and we don't lose them with the language and all the reading (Researcher's Journal, p. 7).

Janelle replied by suggesting a photo from a recent political protest and Susan excitedly agreed. During the next coaching session, the pair reflected on the successes of this activity and decided to use a similar structure for their next lesson.

Janelle explained that reflection was an important aspect of the collaboration between her and Susan. Janelle stated multiple times during the intervention that "reflection is really important" and "I had a lot of fun reflecting" (Reflection Sheets, p. 4). Janelle shared that much of her reflection with Susan involved them questioning one another and providing feedback. Janelle stated, "Sometimes I will start to explain something and realize that it really doesn't make sense then we can work together to make changes or do something else" (Researcher's Journal, p. 6).



Their reflection also revolved around the many formative assessments the pair administered to their class. Janelle shared that it is especially important for her and Susan to reflect and frequently assess their ELLs with disabilities due to their specific needs and diverse background knowledge. Janelle explained with ELLs with disabilities she and Susan:

really need to just check in a little bit more on their day to day, and rely on those little formative assessments to make sure that some of those things, that aren't naturally apparent to me, I can catch in enough time to be able to cover that before they are accountable for something (Individual Interview, p. 1).

According to the interconnected model of professional growth, experiences and feelings of success address two of the four domains within this model (i.e., domain of consequence, domain of practice), ultimately influencing teacher self-efficacy (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002).

During coaching sessions, Janelle reflected on the strategies and approaches used within the intervention class and stated that she implemented new approaches in her other classes, too:

I teach other students with disabilities who are also part of the ESL program in other classes as well. That reflection piece allowed me think about what I would take from the first period. I would be like, 'Oh, that would be really good to use with this student and this student in fifth period.' Even outside of that one class, I was pulling it [strategies] for all of my other classes too with certain students in mind. Again, reflection on my attitudes and reflecting on my opinions about what is fair versus what is equal. It changes who you are as a teacher in all your classes (Individual Interview, p. 4-5).

Janelle's statement indicates that the reflection conducted during the coaching sessions influenced her work both within and outside of her co-taught class with Susan.

**Changes in understandings of ELLs.** Focusing specifically on their class of ELLs with disabilities allowed Janelle to examine her own views and teaching practices. During the interview, Janelle described a major shift in her views of ELLs from the previous school year. When asked “Have your beliefs about ELLs with disabilities changed?” Janelle explained:

I like to think I’m a pretty open person, not clumping kids together like ‘Oh, those are the ESL kids,’ which I would never do with special education students. I know my students are very diverse. Laying aside my own pride and some shame about that, maybe there was a part of me that was grouping kids in the ESL program and thinking they were going to be one way. And then this group of kids, versus my last year’s group of kids, were so different in positive ways and in more challenging ways. Mostly positive. It’s amazing. I think that is something that has changed me (Individual Interview, p. 5).

The structured reflections during the coaching sessions and her experience within this new pairing, allowed Janelle to reflect on her views and adjust some of the preconceived notions that she might have had. This is important because it shows a clear change in her thinking and relates to the personal domain of the interconnected model of professional growth. Janelle’s reflection influenced her personal beliefs and overall self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. This is also supported by Janelle’s responses on the survey. When asked “How much can you do to motivate ELLs with disabilities who show low interest in school work?”, Janelle’s rating went from 6 to 9.

**Increased confidence.** Through the reflective process, Susan was able to gain a deeper understanding of her strengths. Susan shared that the reflective conversations often “confirmed my thinking and reinforced that we need to go with our thinking when it comes to our students” (Reflection Sheets, p. 2). As discussed in Chapter 3, Susan was a second-year teacher and having

these reflections appeared to strengthen Susan's confidence in her abilities and her willingness to share her thoughts with others. This is especially important to note due to the low self-efficacy that is associated with new teachers (Feng & Sass, 2013). Susan discussed how reflecting with Janelle "made me a better teacher" (Individual Interview, p. 5). She continued to explain that this collaborative reflection, "allowed me to focus on growing my strategies for ELLs. It helped me better understand some of the processes that ELLs with disabilities go through with learning" (Individual Interview, p. 7). Susan's responses are supported by the survey findings; her mean Student Engagement subcategory score went from 5.7 to 8 and her mean Student Instruction subcategory score increased from 7.37 to 8.38. Reflection played an important role in this intervention for Susan, and influenced her self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities by increasing her confidence and allowing her to develop a deeper understanding of how ELLs with disabilities learn.

### **Perceived Efficacy of the New Co-Teaching Pairing (RQ3)**

The participants of this study were focused on the student and the various student outcomes they perceived. Janelle and Susan also explained how their pairing and the intervention provided time and structure for them to collaborate and reflect with one another.

**Teacher perception of salient student outcomes.** Susan shared many positive outcomes at the end of the intervention. She discussed how the majority of the ELLs with disabilities in their class received higher scores on the WIDA. The WIDA assessment is a state-level assessment that determines a student's ELL level and determines if a student qualifies for ELL services. Any increases in WIDA scores during the 2016-2017 school year is particularly impressive, because the test was made more rigorous during this year and scores were expected to decrease (WIDA, 2017). Susan, however, shared that four students in the intervention class tested out of receiving

ELL services and will be on monitor status next year. Susan stated, “We had a number of our kids score out of WIDA, which was a really cool thing to share with them towards the end of the year” (Individual Interview, p. 8). Susan continued to explain the high stakes testing data and stated, “That’s data, and it shows that their learning outcome is more affected by our co-teaching pair” (Individual Interview, p. 8).

Janelle also discussed many perceived student learning outcomes. She described that the students had made great gains from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. When discussing the success of their pairing Janelle explained “we make them challenge themselves a lot in our class and because of this, they have grown a lot” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 5). Janelle expanded on this statement and stated:

This year, I think the students have gotten a lot out of our small group instruction. Having two of us makes pulling small groups is a lot easier and allows us to be more targeted. We have also influenced student learning this year by exposing the students to new ways of learning and really facilitating deeper understandings. I am really excited to share with the students their work from the beginning of the year and their work now (Researcher’s Journal, p. 5).

During the individual interview, Janelle shared her memory of being able to share some of the student growth she perceived. Janelle explained:

Their confidence was bolstered. I was like, ‘You know what? You guys are using assertion, evidence, and commentary. You’re ready for high school.’ I think that let them make huge gains and it’s because we also believe in them, that they could do it (Individual Interview, p. 9).

Janelle also explained that the amount of scaffolding that the class needed, as a whole, greatly decreased from the beginning to the end of the year. When explaining a project assigned at the end of the year, Janelle stated, “I think that they came a long way. They ended up doing basically the same essay that our regular team classes did” (Individual Interview, p. 9). Janelle also described improvement and the development of “life skills” that the students will use beyond high school. Janelle shared, “We teach our students life skills that they need and that go beyond our curriculum and that is something I am really proud of” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 5).

Janelle described how their ELLs with disabilities outperformed their non-identified peers in various project based learning opportunities:

I would say that Susan and I are a pretty successful pairing. I think that our kids do better because there are two of us. I think that we even have some data to prove that with our SOLs [standards of learning; i.e., end-of-course exams] and with what we can get our students to produce. Our students got way more.... Our students did really well. They got a lot of the internships, more than other pairings, our kids (Individual Interview, p. 10).

This shows how Janelle attributed many of her perceived student learning outcomes to the new co-teaching pairing. Janelle’s perceived outcomes are noteworthy because, as part of the domain of consequence in the interconnected model of professional growth, they influence teacher change and self-efficacy (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002).

Janelle also discussed her relationships with her co-teacher and students at great length. Janelle stated, “We have really great relationships with our students and each other. This helps the students feel comfortable to ask for help and do things in our class that they might be afraid to do in other classes” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 5). According to Janelle, her and Susan’s relationship with their students allowed their students to take risks within the classroom and

grow both academically and emotionally. The strong relationship between Susan and Janelle and their students was also showcased during the video reflection when the students advocated for their needs. Janelle reflected on the critical incident by stating, “The students felt comfortable and safe to call us over and let us know that they didn’t understand” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 11). She also explained during this reflection, “Having the two of us together has made this happen. We are able to take the time to build strong relationships with these students and can model effective collaboration for our students” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 11). Susan made similar statements during a coaching session by stating:

We have strong relationships with our students which allows them to take risks and feel comfortable asking for help when they need it. In our class, we ask students to speak, write and read in English. This can be really challenging for our dually identified students, however we have high expectations for them that they meet. . . . I think through pushing students, building relationships and providing small group instruction when needed has allowed us to influence student learning (p. 5).

These findings are also supported by the survey data collected. Susan’s mean Student Engagement score increased from 5.7 to 8 and Janelle’s increased from 7.5 to 8.8. The fourth question on this survey asked: “How much can you do to motivate ELLs with disabilities to who show low interest in school?” Janelle’s response to this question increased from 6 on the pre-survey to 9 on the post-survey. The fifth question on this survey asked: “How much can you do to feel ELLs with disabilities to believe that can do well in school work?” Susan’s response to this question increased from a 5 on the pre-survey to a 9 on the post-survey. This response aligns with the statements provided by both Susan and Janelle.

**Creation of a change environment.** When asked about collaboration within this new co-teaching pairing, Janelle shared, “I wish that there was more collaboration between me and the ESL department” (Individual Interview, p. 2). She continued to explain, “I feel like special education and ESL have so much in common but not everything in common and we assume a lot that we know the same things and I know I don’t” (Individual Interview, p. 2). When asked how the new pairing influenced her ability to influence the desired change with ELLs with disabilities, Janelle responded, “Oh, it’s had an amazing impact, I think. I think it’s that collaboration I felt was missing between us and the ESL department” (Individual Interview, p. 4). The co-teaching pairing provided an opportunity for special education and ELL teachers to collaborate.

**Perceived teacher changes.** When asked a similar question, Susan responded, “I think that working with Janelle made me understand better how to teach ELLs with disabilities. I adopt the belief that all students have the ability to learn and grow, but Jen definitely affects my ability to teach” (Individual Interview, p. 8).

When asked to describe her experience within this new pairing, Susan responded, “I think it made me a better teacher. It allowed me to focus more on growing my strategies for ELLs with disabilities. It helped me better understand some of the processes that ELLs with disabilities go through with learning” (Individual Interview, p. 7). This shows that Susan viewed the new pairing as both an effective way to influence student learning outcomes as well as her personal self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. Susan also shared that she felt more willing to try new strategies in the intervention class than some of her other classes. Susan explained that trying new structures in a class on her own would be “scary just trying” (Individual Interview, p. 8), but in the new co-teaching pairing Susan explained how “it’s easier

to do that [trying new strategies]” (Individual Interview, p. 8). She continued to explain how the new co-teaching pairing “helped us understand the co-teaching models better” (Individual Interview, p. 8).

#### **Implementation and Fidelity (RQ4)**

Overall, the implementation of the intervention adhered to the proposed implementation. To show that the implementation of the intervention had high fidelity, each element of fidelity measured is discussed below.

**Adherence.** Dusenbury et al. (2003) explained that adherence refers to the level of consistency between actual implementation and the way the plan was written. A study has adequate adherence when the critical components of the intervention were implemented as intended (Dusenbury et al., 2003). As explained in Chapter 3, the critical components of this intervention are effective participation in a co-teaching relationship, coaching sessions, and the structured reflection.

***Effective participation in the co-teaching relationship.*** On the “Are We Really Co-teaching” survey that was within the teacher’s biweekly report, Susan only responded “No” to a maximum of three of the 27 questions on each of the six surveys (see Appendix O). This indicates an effective co-teaching relationship (Cramer & Nevin, 2006). Janelle’s responses to the “Are We Really Co-Teaching” surveys were similar to Susan’s responses. Janelle responded “No” to only two questions during the first report, and then reported “No” to three questions on the second report; she was out sick for multiple days during this 2-week time period. Janelle responded “Yes” to all questions on the four remaining reports (see Appendix P).

Janelle and Susan also both discussed having an effective and strong co-teaching relationship during the coaching sessions and individual interviews. For example, Susan said,



“Our co-teaching partnership is kind of perfect” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 3). Janelle also shared, “I adore my co-teacher and being able to talk to her and relying on her knowledge of how to work with students where English is their second language is really important” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 1-2).

***Coaching sessions and structured reflections.*** Both participants participated in all six coaching session. Each coaching session had at least 15 minutes of structured reflection time. The time spent on the coaching sessions and structured reflections is evaluated as *dose*.

**Dose.** Dose refers to the number of sessions completed and the duration of the sessions (Dusenbury et al., 2003). Janelle and Susan participated in all coaching sessions and completed all biweekly reports. The researcher originally allotted 30 minutes for each coaching session, however, each session went slightly longer due to the participants’ requests. The exact times for each session can be seen in Appendix M.

The structured reflection piece of the coaching sessions also took longer than originally planned. The researcher originally allotted 10 minutes to reflect with the pair. The actual time spent reflecting varied from session to session, but always lasted over 10 minutes. Because strong fidelity was defined as a minimum projected time, the added time does not have a negative influence on fidelity.

**Quality of delivery.** The quality of delivery in this study referred to the effectiveness of the researchers’ coaching sessions. This was measured using the researcher’s journal and reflection sheets. Janelle and Susan both reported enjoying the coaching sessions and shared that the sessions were helpful in each reflection sheet. To explicitly address the quality of delivery in this study, the participant responded to “Was the co-teaching session effective? Why or Why not?” at the end of each session via the reflection sheet. Both Susan and Janelle responded “Yes”

to this question every week and shared a short connection or component that they found particularly helpful. For example, as part of the third coaching session Susan responded, “Yes! I got some great ideas to try with my other co-teacher” (Reflection Sheets, p. 2). At the fifth session, Janelle responded to this question by stating: “Very. It made me think about the lesson tomorrow and come up with strategies” (Reflection Sheets, p. 4). These responses showcase the high quality of delivery for this intervention.

**Participant responsiveness.** Participant responsiveness refers to the level in which the participants are engaged or involved in the intervention (Dusenbury et al., 2003). The intervention had strong participant responsiveness. Both participants engaged with all six coaching sessions and reported having positive feelings towards the coaching sessions. Both participants also reported enjoying working with one another, interacting with the researcher, and responding to her questions. Janelle explained that “just taking time to think about your questions was helpful” (Reflection Sheets, p. 2). The participants were eager to respond to the reflections that the researcher facilitated as well as the co-teaching support. As described previously, the participants choose to spend more time on the coaching sessions than the researcher originally allotted. This indicates that the teachers viewed the sessions as helpful and important. During the last coaching session, Janelle stated, “We both really like having the specific time to really reflect about how things have been going. Next year, we talked about building this into our planning time” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 10). Susan also shared during the final session, “We also realize that having some structured time to planning and reflection helps us to be more efficient. I definitely want to continue this next year” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 10). These statements show that both participants were engaged and involved with the intervention, and plan to continue to implement a core component of the intervention: designated time to

collaborate and reflect. Indeed, this teaching pair has continued with the structured reflection time in the 2017-2018 school year. The pair checks in at the end of each day to reflect on how their students are doing and how their activities supported student learning. The pair records their reflections and revisits their notes during their planning time.

### **Conclusions**

This study provides a base for future research surrounding ELLs with disabilities and teacher self-efficacy. The findings from this study indicate that collaboration and reflection play a critical role in the development of teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities. Collaboration with the researcher and each other allowed the participants to plan effectively, and thus the instruction provided to ELLs with disabilities. The trust and relationship that the pair had prior to the intervention appeared to be a major influence on the effectiveness of their collaboration and planning together. Both Janelle and Susan discussed being able to trust each other and not feel judged when new changes or ideas were proposed. This was an important finding because it showed how the relationship the pair had influenced their planning and overall ability to develop activities to meet the specific needs of the ELLs with disabilities within their classroom.

The participants viewed reflection as an essential component of their teaching relationship. The pair used reflection to gain a deeper understanding of what their students knew and how they were able to improve instruction to meet the needs of ELLs with disabilities. The coaching sessions in this study allowed the participants time to reflect on their classroom practices and make adjustments for future activities. Susan and Janelle discussed how their reflection with one another allowed them to learn new strategies and increase their overall confidence when working with ELLs with disabilities. Susan, a second year ELL teacher, shared

that her confidence had increased by the end of the intervention. This is important because increased confidence is related to higher teacher self-efficacy, which is often low with beginning teachers (Jerald, 2007). Janelle, an experienced special education teacher, explained a major shift in her views surrounding ELLs. She was able to adjust previous beliefs she held and reported applying these changes to her teaching in other, non-intervention classrooms.

The participants in this study also explained how their co-teaching partnership enabled them to collaborate and reflect easily and more specifically than collaboration with individuals outside of the classroom. Through the coaching sessions and the development of the new pairing, the pair described changes within themselves and their own understanding as well as perceived student outcomes. During the interview, Susan explained improvements she saw through the students' ELL assessment (i.e., WIDA). Janelle also talked about a decrease in the amount of scaffolds needed by the students. These perceived changes within themselves and their students' learning increases the teachers' self-efficacy and can create lasting changes (Jerald, 2007). The ELLs with disabilities in the participants' class were a clear focus throughout the 12-week intervention period.

## **Discussion**

This section presents the findings from this study and makes connections between the findings and current literature surrounding teacher self-efficacy. This section elaborates upon the various domains that were influenced within the interconnected model of professional change and further discuss the major findings from this study.

### **Interconnected Model of Professional Growth**

As discussed in Chapter 3, the interconnected model of professional growth was used as the framework for this study. Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2002) describe the interconnected

model of professional growth as a change process that occurs through the reflection and enactments between four different domains that make up a teacher's world. The four domains within the interconnected model of profession growth are (a) the personal domain, (b) the domain of practice, (c) the domain of consequence, and (d) the external domain. Each of the domains within this model were influenced by the intervention.

**Personal domain.** The personal domain refers to the knowledge, beliefs and attitudes of teachers. The findings indicate that the intervention did influence changes within this domain. For example, Janelle's beliefs about ELLs changed from the beginning of the intervention to the end. During her individual interview, she explained:

Laying aside my own pride and some shame about that, [preconceptions about ELLs] maybe there was a part of me that was grouping kids in the ESL program and thinking that they were going to be one way and then this group of kids versus my last year's group of kids. (p. 5)

Janelle continued by stating, "It's amazing. I think that is something that changed me" (Individual Interview, p. 5). This statement shows how Janelle identified changes within her own knowledge, attitude, and beliefs surrounding ELLs and their diverse characteristics. This finding also indicates teacher learning and change because multiple domains were influenced. Janelle makes this statements after describing her work with ELLs with disabilities in previous years and her work with ELLs with disabilities during the intervention.

Susan's beliefs about herself also shifted. She stated, "I feel more confident because of her [Janelle]" (Individual Interview, p. 4). Susan's perceived increase in confidence shows that her personal domain was influenced by the intervention. This is noteworthy because it shows that

the participants stated changes to their personal beliefs and connected these changes to the new co-teaching pairing and the interventions experiences.

**Domain of practice.** The domain of practice refers to experimentation within the professional setting, which is often associated with teacher self-efficacy and is discussed later in this section. Both participants reported feeling more comfortable taking risks and trying different co-teaching models with one another. Susan explained, “it’s easier to do stations and parallel teaching, because we trusted each other” (Individual Interview, p. 8). Susan was willing to try more various models with Janelle than she was with others or alone. Janelle responded in a similar manner by explaining that the co-teaching pairing “made me feel better about taking risks” (Individual Interview, p.10). This aligns with previous findings on teacher self-efficacy that indicate that teachers with higher self-efficacy are more likely to take risks and try new strategies within the classroom (Dixon et. al, 2014).

The domain of practice is also integral to this study because the intervention itself lies within this domain. The pairing of a special education teacher (Janelle) and an ELL teacher (Susan) to teach a class of ELLs with disabilities was in and of itself a new strategy for providing services to ELLs with disabilities. The coaching sessions within this intervention also provided an opportunity for teacher planning and the development of new strategies to implement within the class. Within the personal domain, planning and even thinking about new strategies or instructional methods promotes changes and teacher learning (Zwart, Wubbels, Bergen, & Bolhuis, 2007).

**Domain of consequence.** The domain of consequence refers to the teacher’s perception of salient outcomes. Although specific student outcomes were not measured in this study, both participants reference multiple outcomes in connection to the co-teaching pairing and the

perceived effectiveness. Susan shared “we had a number of our kids score out of WIDA, which was a really cool thing to share with them towards the end of the year” (Individual Interview, p. 8). Susan’s analysis of student performance on this English literacy test indicates that she perceived a salient and measurable student outcome from the new co-teaching pairing.

According to Guskey (1986), perceived outcomes have a major influence on the other domains and overall teacher change. When a teacher perceives a positive outcome in relationship to a specific practice or idea, they are more likely to repeat the new strategy or act on a particular idea (Zwart et al., 2007). This aligns with Janelle’s discussion about using strategies developed in the co-taught class in her other classes with ELLs with disabilities. Janelle explained, “the reflection, what I would take from the first period, I then would be like, Oh, that would be really good to use with this student and this student in fifth period” (Individual Interview, p. 5).

Janelle’s reflection on outcomes within the co-taught class allowed her to make connections to other classes and plan to more effectively meet the needs of ELLs with disabilities. The connection of the domain of consequence and the personal domains through enactment and reflection aligns with the interconnect model of professional growth and the findings from previous studies on teacher learning (Anderson & Moore, 2006; Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002).

**External domain.** The external is the only domain outside of the individual teacher’s personal world. The external domain refers to outside information or stimulus. This domain is critical to the organization of the intervention. In the case of this study the co-teachers provided new information, perspectives, and stimulus to one another. The coaching sessions also provided the participants with additional stimulus to create new learning and facilitate reflections. The relationship between the two participants allowed the participants to reflect with one another and the enactment of new ideas and strategies. Susan stated, “I realize how important trust and

relationships are to co-teaching-Janelle and I don't have must conflict because we talk a lot and trust one another" (Reflection Sheets, p. 1). Susan also discussed how Janelle "brings a new perspective" (Researcher's Journal, p. 3) which helps her develop ideas and refine ideas and activities for ELLs with disabilities. Janelle stated "the reflection was important and also the ability to reflect with somebody who wasn't going to judge me for when I said, 'No, I don't know if that was actually a great idea. Maybe I didn't do that right' or didn't have a competitiveness" (Individual Interview, p. 3). Janelle described being able to get feedback from her co-teacher to refine her own practices and understandings. This is especially important because the processes of enactment and reflection are essential to the interconnected model of professional growth.

### **Teacher Self-Efficacy**

Research questions one and two both focus on how collaboration and reflection influence teacher self-efficacy. The participants in this study reported utilizing planning time effectively with one another, taking more risks, and developing new strategies to meet the needs of ELLs with disabilities. The participants also indicated that they were more likely to take risks, plan, and implement new strategies due to their collaboration with one another. For example, Susan stated, "I think that working with Janelle and the strategies that we use in our team taught classes, I think that I was able to better understand and implement them" (Individual Interview, p. 1). Janelle explained that the intervention allowed her to "feel better about taking risks" (Individual Interview, p. 10). The changes in planning, taking risks, and implementing new strategies is important to this study because these are indicators of high teacher self-efficacy (Jerald, 2007).



**Collaboration.** Previous studies have shown that organizational and teacher issues influence teacher performance and overall self-efficacy (Killoran et al., 2013; Panque & Barbetta, 2006). The collaboration within this study addressed both areas of need for the participants. Organizational issues were addressed through effective use of planning time. Susan and Janelle both shared positive experiences planning with one another and shared examples of how they individually benefited. Susan shared, “our collaboration made me think about the lesson in different ways and enhanced some of my ideas” (Reflection Sheets, p. 2). Susan also shared that when having planning conversations, “we come up with the best lessons” that were more strategically designed to meet their student’s needs (Researcher’s Journal, p. 4). These findings show how Susan valued the co-planning time, and how Susan perceived the co-planning and collaboration addressed the organizational issues that influence self-efficacy.

When discussing planning, Janelle shared how collaboration allowed the pair to, “design instruction specifically to meet the needs of our DI [dually identified; i.e., ELLs with disabilities] students” (Reflection Sheets, p. 4). Janelle’s descriptions of collaboration and co-planning also highlight how these organizational issues can positively influence meeting the needs of diverse learners. Janelle explained that with ELLs with disabilities, “you can’t just do what was done last year” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 4). Janelle and Susan needed to collaborate with one another to design instruction that was specifically geared towards their students’ needs. Janelle’s statement indicates how she and Susan collaborated and planned lessons specifically to meet the needs of their unique population to overcome the organizational issues that negatively impact teacher self-efficacy.

Teacher issues refer to experience and the knowledge needed to teach a specific subject and population (Killoran et al., 2013). The participants learned from one another’s expertise and

experience through collaboration. Susan, an ELL teacher who was only in her second year of teaching, explained, “I think that I generally feel more comfortable with Jen around just because she’s got the experience” and that “she’s [Janelle] got the training for this special education side, and I can come just with the ESOL in mind” (Individual Interview, p. 2). The pair was able to benefit from one another’s expertise. As Susan explained, she felt more confident working with Janelle because Janelle had more classroom experience. Susan also recognized that she brought the ELL expertise and knowledge and Janelle provided the special education expertise. Susan further explained combining her knowledge with Janelle by stating:

I think it’s less pressure on both of us, but because we work so well together and we collaborate so well and mesh everything so well, I think it just takes away the pressure of thinking about the two things separately, and instead, thinking about the students and the way that they learn. It takes the labels off of it and it’s easier to scaffold (Individual Interview, p. 2).

This explanation reflects how through their collaboration, Susan and Janelle alleviated some of the pressure associated with teacher issues such, as meeting multiple areas of need for ELLs with disabilities. Susan and Janelle used each other’s expertise to meet the needs of their individual students. Janelle supported Susan’s descriptions by stating, “collaboration allows us to design instruction specifically to meet the needs of our dually identified [ELLs with disabilities] students” (Reflections, p. 4).

**Reflection.** The collaborative reflection conducted through the coaching sessions and co-planning time, provided the participants with time to think about their practice and develop new ways to address challenges. Janelle explained, “Reflection is really important. Working with you [the researcher] has allowed us to reflect in different ways” (Individual Interview, p. 3). Janelle

continued to give an example of how a lesson changed due to reflections during the coaching session. She then explained, “it [reflection] definitely brought it back up into our mind of, Okay, what should we be doing for the specific students and with the ELLs with disabilities?” (Individual Interview, p. 3). The reflection conducted by the participants enabled them to develop stronger and more targeted plans. This is important to teacher self-efficacy because it allows teachers to create positive learning experiences that can strengthen individual teacher self-efficacy (Kayapinar, 2013).

Susan’s reflection during the intervention supported her level of confidence when teaching ELLs with disabilities. Susan shared that reflections, “confirmed my thinking and reinforced that we need to go with our thinking when it comes to our students” (Reflection Sheets, p. 2). Susan also shared that reflecting with Janelle “made me a better teacher” (Individual Interview, p. 5). These findings are important because they show that Susan perceived a connection between her reflection and overall confidence as a teacher. Increases in confidence in teaching ability is especially important because it speaks to increases in teacher self-efficacy (Leyser, Zeiger, & Romi, 2011).

### **Interpersonal Relationships**

The relationship between the participants was a critical finding of this study. Both Susan and Janelle described having a strong co-teaching relationship, which seemed to play a substantial role in their collaboration with one another. When discussing collaboration, for example, Janelle explained, “I need to be able to trust the person that I’m collaborating with” (Individual Interview, p. 2). Susan shared similar statements such as, “I think this [the relationship and trust] is one of the reasons that the workload is not shared in my other co-teaching partnership” (Researcher’s Journal, p. 3). These findings are critical because it points to

interpersonal relationships as playing an important role in teachers' abilities to effectively collaborate with one another. Janelle and Susan collaborated and planned so effectively because they had developed a strong relationship. Susan explained, "We trust each other and don't allow ego to get in the way" (Researcher's Journal, p. 4), and Janelle stated "Susan and I are friends and we became friends through being co-teachers" (Individual Interview, p. 10).

The participant's discussion around their co-teaching relationship aligns with current research on the best practices of co-teaching (Walsh 2012). Co-teachers must establish a rapport that allows them to develop trust and an understanding of how to utilize the expertise of the other individual (Friend & Cook, 2010). Strong relationships between co-teachers has also been shown to overcome many of the obstacle associate with co-teachings such as planning time and assessments (Mastropieri et al., 2005).

### **Limitations and Implications for Practice and Future Research**

There are several limitations to the current study. First, there are only two participants in this study. Two pairs of participants were asked to participate in this study, but due to changes in staffing only one pair met the inclusion criteria. Although this is acceptable for a case study (Yin, 2003), future research should expand upon this sample size. This intervention was also implemented during a 12-week period due to time restraints of the researcher and participants. Future research on this intervention should occur over a longer period of time, such as an entire school year. The researcher did see short term change; however, future research could focus on some of the long-term objectives presented in the logic model (see Appendix D).

It is also important to note that the co-teaching pairing ended up being an extreme case (Hatch, 2002), in that they had already established a strong co-teaching relationship. Additionally, there was already an emphasis on effective co-teaching within the school setting.

Future research should focus on diversifying the sample of participants studied. Because the pair selected had already developed a strong relationship, less time was spent on building rapport than was originally planned. Thus, the agenda topics originally proposed were changed slightly to more appropriately meet the needs of the specific pair. For example, less time was spent on building rapport between the two teachers because they had already been co-teaching for 7 months prior to the intervention and a strong rapport had already developed. During the third session, for example, the researcher eliminated the building rapport activity to allow more time for reflection and the discussion around conflict.

The researcher also adjusted the order of topics originally proposed for the coaching sessions to best meet the needs of the individual pair. For example, based on the discussion on co-planning during Session 4 the researcher moved the topic of assessment from Session 6 to Session 5. The researcher also spent more time focused on the different co-teaching models than was originally planned due to the participants' requests during the coaching sessions and the biweekly reports.

This study showed that collaboration and reflection had a positive relationship with the self-efficacy of the participants when working with ELLs with disabilities. This intervention addressed some of the factors associated with the low self-efficacy of teachers when working with ELLs with disabilities, such as planning with service providers. This study also showed that the coaching sessions between a new special education and ELL co-teaching pairing provided a structure for teachers to collaborate and reflect on a regularly scheduled basis. The participants also reported feeling more able to efficiently meet all the needs of ELLs with disabilities within this new pairing. This indicates that more research needs to be conducted to further investigate the role that different co-teaching pairings can have on teacher self-efficacy.

The findings from this study supports that a new co-teaching pairing can support both collaboration and reflection. The current study suggests that a co-teaching pairing between a special education and an ELL teacher can be beneficial for increasing teacher self-efficacy and promoting teacher change. This research suggests that allowing two teachers with differing areas of expertise to co-teach a class of students with multiple needs could be an effective structure for building teacher self-efficacy and meeting the needs of the diverse learners.

Although the focus of this study was not on student learning outcomes, future research is needed to determine how collaboration, reflection, and the co-teaching pairing influences student learning outcomes. The participants in this study described changes and increases in student performance, however, more research is needed to explicitly connect positive learning outcomes with teacher collaboration and reflection. Future research on the influence of reflection and collaboration on teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities should use larger sample sizes in a variety of settings to confirm the results from the current study. This would allow for more research with typical cases of co-teachers and also investigate varying grade levels and subject areas.

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Appendix A

Participant Consent Form

Johns Hopkins University

Homewood Institutional Review Board (HIRB)

**Informed Consent Form**

**Title:** The Achievement of English Language Learners with Disabilities

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Eith, Johns Hopkins University

**Date:** March 22, 2015

**PURPOSE OF RESEARCH STUDY:**

The purpose of this research study is to determine how language needs and service delivery models impact the achievement of students that require both special education and English language learner services.

We anticipate that approximately 50 people will participate in the survey portion of our study, and five people to participate in the observations.

**PROCEDURES:**

Each participant will be asked to complete a survey. Based on the survey responses, participants will be chosen to be asked to participate in an interview. The survey contains 20 questions. If chosen to participate in the interview, there will be one group interview that will take place after school for about one hour.

**RISKS/DISCOMFORTS:**

There are no foreseeable risks.

**BENEFITS:**

The potential benefits are the increased understanding of how language acquisition and different service models impact student achievement. It is believed that better understanding of these variables will inform future instruction and help to determine specific strategies to improve achievement of students with both special education and English language learner needs.

Title: The Achievement of English Language Learners with Disabilities

PI: Dr. Eith

Date: 3/22/2015

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND RIGHT TO WITHDRAW:**

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary: You choose whether to participate. If you decide not to participate, there are no penalties, and you will not lose any benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled.

If you choose to participate in the study, you can stop your participation at any time, without any penalty or loss of benefits. If you want to withdraw from the study, please contact Jennifer Gonzalez via email: jgonza50@jhu.edu.

If a decision to withdraw from the study would have any significant consequences for the participant, explain these consequences.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY:

Any study records that identify you will be kept confidential to the extent possible by law. The records from your participation may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including members of the Johns Hopkins University Homewood Institutional Review Board and officials from government agencies such as the National Institutes of Health and the Office for Human Research Protections. (All of these people are required to keep your identity confidential.) Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

Participants will be given code numbers rather than using names. All data will be kept in a locked room and on a computer that is password protected. All records will be destroyed after the study has been completed.

#### COMPENSATION:

You will not receive any payment or other compensation for participating in this study.

#### IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:

You can ask questions about this research study now or at any time during the study, by talking to the researcher(s) working with you or by calling Jennifer Gonzalez at (703)618-0488.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or feel that you have not been treated fairly, please call the Homewood Institutional Review Board at Johns Hopkins University at (410) 516-6580.

Title: The Achievement of English Language Learners with Disabilities

PI: Jennifer Gonzalez

Date: 3/22/2015

#### SIGNATURES

##### WHAT YOUR SIGNATURE MEANS:

Your signature below means that you understand the information in this consent form.

Your signature also means that you agree to participate in the study.

By signing this consent form, you have not waived any legal rights you otherwise would have as a participant in a research study.

---

**Participant's Signature**

**Date**

---

**Signature of Person Obtaining Consent  
(Investigator or HIRB Approved Designee)**

**Date**

**Survey Instrumentation**

Survey for Teacher, Service Providers, and Administrators

Circle the category that identifies or most closely identifies you professional practice:

a. Teacher

b. Service Provider

c. Administrator

Read the following statements and check the box that most closely aligns with your professional practice and personal opinion.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	I Don't Know	Agree	Strongly Agree
I teach or interact with English language learners with special education needs.					
I know how to address both areas of need for English Language learners with disabilities.					
I use strategies to accommodate for both areas of need on a daily basis.					
I can list strategies that are effective for students with both special education and English language learner needs.					
I would like more professional development about meeting the needs of English language learners with disabilities.					
I explicitly choose strategies to meet both areas of need for English Language learners with disabilities.					

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	I Don't Know	Agree	Strongly Agree
English language learners with disabilities make appropriate progress in my classroom or professional practice.					
The acquisition of English is negatively impacted by a student's special education needs.					
I frequently need to change what I say to be understood by English language learners with disabilities.					
The vocabulary in my professional practice or curriculum is difficult for English language learners with disabilities to understand.					
English language learners with disabilities take more time to show mastery of information than their peers that just require English language learner services.					
English language learners with disabilities take more time to show mastery of information than their peers that just require special education needs.					
English language learners with disabilities take more time to show mastery of information than their non-identified peers.					

Circle the following choice that most closely lines up with your current professional practice or experience.

I collaborate with special education service providers on a...

- A. Daily basis
- B. Weekly basis
- C. Monthly basis
- D. Never

I collaborate with English language learner service providers on a...

- A. Daily basis
- B. Weekly basis
- C. Monthly basis
- D. Never



## Appendix C

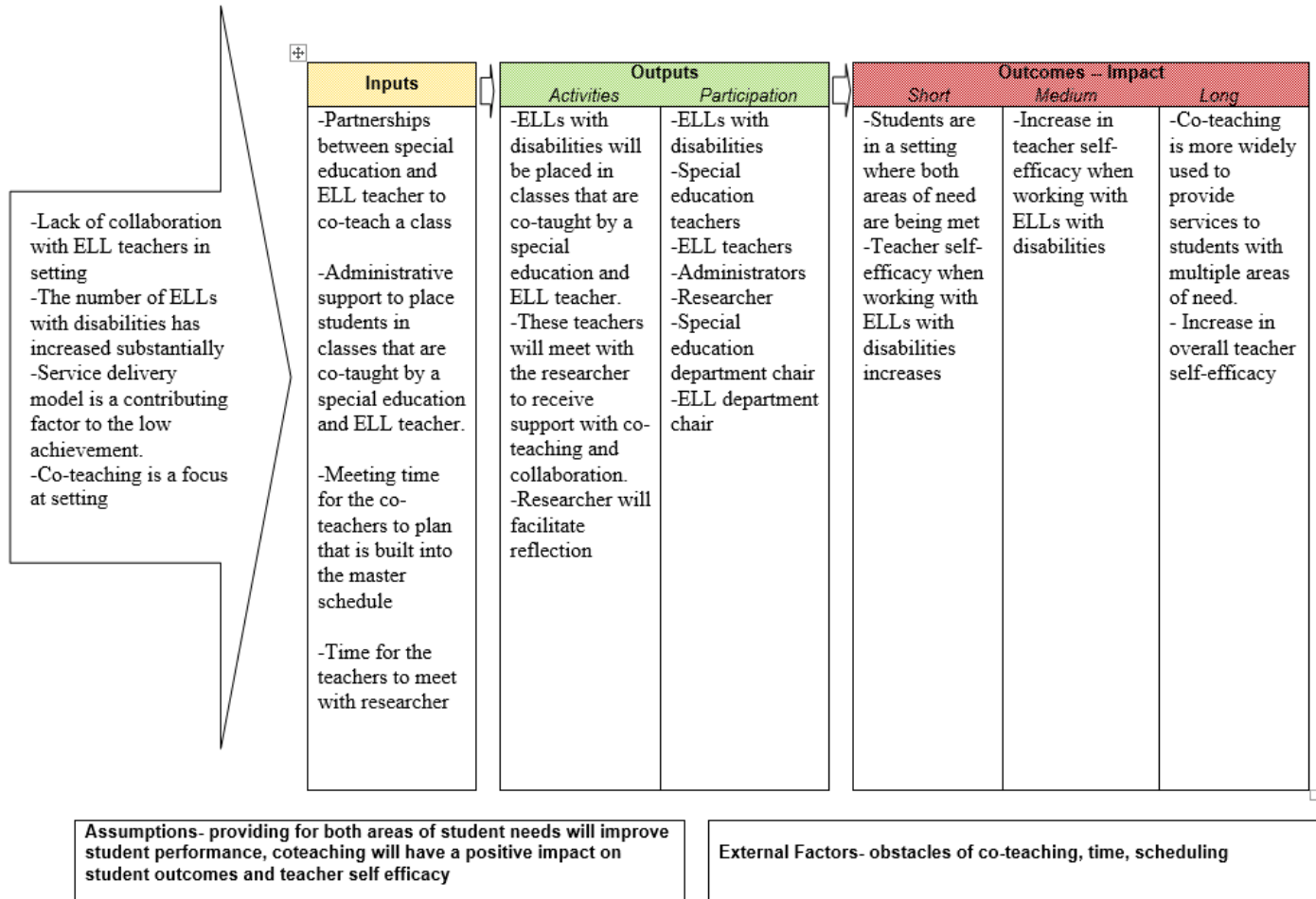
### Needs Assessment Interview Questions

Introduction: Hello my name is Jennifer Wildasin. Thank your all for participating in my study. I will be asking you questions on your perceptions when working with ELLs with disabilities. Please feel free to ask me any questions as we go through this process. Does anyone have any questions before we get started?

- a) How do you differentiate for ELLs with disabilities? And how are their needs met?
- b) What difficulties do you observe ELLs with disabilities to have?
- c) What do you believe your strengths and weaknesses are when working with ELLs with disabilities?
- d) What language difficulties do you observe with this population?
- e) What types of tasks are most difficult for ELLs with disabilities?
- f) What strategies do you use to support ELLs with disabilities and why do you believe these strategies are effective or ineffective?

## Appendix D

### Logic Model



## Appendix E

### Teacher Biweekly Report

Adapted from “Are We Really Co-teaching” by Villa, R., Thousand, J., & Nevin, A, 2004, *A guide to co-teaching: Practical tips for facilitating student learning*. Copyright 2004 by Corwin Press.

The electronic form can be accessed below:

<https://docs.google.com/a/fcpsschools.net/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeUL66ljLLrozSP3Zco526tEIIZw-ji3VTyc44fI2I8BAAYXg/viewform>

A copy of the text from this form can be seen below.

#### Co-planning and Co-assessing

##### Section 1

1. How much time did you spend co-planning and co-assessing this week?
2. What co-teaching models have you used this week?
3. How often did you use each model?
4. What challenges or successes would you like to share?
5. Do you have any questions? If so, please record below?

##### Section 2

Directions: Check “yes” or “no” for each of the following statements.

6. We decide which co-teaching models we are going to use in a lesson based on the benefits to the students and the co-teachers.
7. We share ideas, information and material.
8. We identify the resources and talents of the co-teachers.
9. We teach different groups of students at the same time.
10. We are aware of what our co-teacher(s) is doing even when we are not directly in one another’s presence.
11. We share responsibility for deciding what to teach.
12. We agree on the curriculum standards that will be addressed in a lesson.
13. We share responsibility for deciding how to teach.
14. We share responsibility for deciding who teacher which part of a lesson.
15. We are flexible and make changes as needed during a lesson.
16. We identify student strengths and needs.
17. We share responsibility for differentiating instruction.

18. We include other people when their expertise or experience is needed.
19. We share responsibility for how student learning is assessed.
20. We can show that students are learning when we co-teach.
21. We agree on discipline procedures and carry them out jointly.
22. We give feedback to one another on what goes on in the classroom.
23. We make improvements in our lesson based on what happens in the classroom.
24. We communicate our concerns freely.
25. We have a process for resolving our disagreements and use it when faced with problems and conflicts.
26. We celebrate the process of co-teaching and the outcomes and successes.
27. We have regularly scheduled times to meet and discuss our work.
28. We use our meeting time productively.
29. We model collaboration and teamwork for our students.
30. We are both views by our students as their teacher.
31. We depend on one another to follow through on tasks and responsibilities.
32. We can use a variety of co-teaching approaches (e.g., parallel, team teaching, etc.).

## Appendix F

### **Reflection Sheet**

1. Was the coaching session effective? Why or why not?
2. Do you feel like the coaching session connected to what you were doing in the classroom? Please explain your answer.
3. How the reflection completed during this session influenced your thinking?
4. How has your collaboration with one another influenced your thinking?

## Appendix G

### Protocol and Interview Guides

#### Individual Interview

Introduction: Thank you again for participating in my study. I will be asking you questions on your perceptions when working with ELLs with disabilities and the new co-teaching model.

Please feel free to ask me any questions as we go through this process. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Date:

Interviewee:

Questions:

Teachers' Role:

1. What is your role in teaching ELLs with disabilities in this setting?
2. Did the new co-teaching model change your role? Why or why not?
3. How is your role in this new model different than your role in other models used to meet the needs of ELLs with disabilities?

Teacher Self-Efficacy (RQ1 and RQ2)

4. How comfortable do you feel teaching ELLs with disabilities?
5. Do you believe that you can support the learning of ELLs with disabilities within your classroom? Why or why not? How do you know?
6. What role has collaboration played in how comfortable you feel supporting the learning of ELLs with disabilities? How do you know?
7. What role has reflection played in how comfortable you feel supporting the learning of ELLs with disabilities? How do you know?

6. How has the intervention, if at all, influenced your ability to impact desired change with ELLs with disabilities?

I will also ask the teachers about the responses on the Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey.

#### Efficacy of Co-teaching Pairing (RQ3)

7. How would you describe your experience within this new model?
8. Did the co-teaching pairing change your beliefs about how ELLs with disabilities can be taught? If so, how? If not, why not?
9. Do you believe this new co-teaching pairing is an improvement over the traditional model?
10. Give examples of successes and challenges specific to the co-teaching pairing.

## Appendix H

### Summary Matrix

Research Questions	Constructs	Measures	Data Analysis
How does collaboration within a new co-teaching pairing influence teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities?	Teacher self-efficacy, thoughts, feelings, attitudes	Survey, Interview, Researcher's journal, reflection sheets, biweekly reports	Descriptive Statistics, Conventional Content Analysis
How does reflection within a new co-teaching pairing influence teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs with disabilities?	Teacher self-efficacy, thoughts, feelings, attitudes	Survey, Interview, Researcher's journal, reflection sheets, biweekly reports	Descriptive Statistics, Conventional Content Analysis
What are the ELL teacher and special education teacher's perceptions of the efficacy of the new model of co-teaching?	Teacher perceptions of the co-teaching model	Survey, Interview, Researcher's journal, reflection sheets, biweekly reports	Descriptive Statistics, Conventional Content Analysis
How has the study implementation adhered to or differed from the proposed implementation procedures?	Fidelity of implementation	Researcher's journal, Biweekly reports, Reflection sheets	Conventional Content Analysis



## Appendix I

### Co-Teaching Presentation

Adapted from “Teacher Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Inclusion in Elementary Classroom Settings” by D. Peacock, 2016, *Doctoral Dissertation*. p.114.



# What is Co-teaching?



## What is Co-Teaching?

- ▶ Co-teaching can be defined as two different teachers equally sharing all of the classroom responsibilities.
  - ▶ Co-planning
  - ▶ Co-assessing
  - ▶ Co-teaching

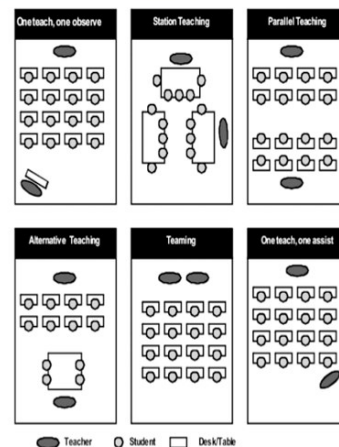
## What is Co-teaching

Co-teaching requires an outlook that both teachers share the classroom and students. Co-teachers should always think that...

**WE ARE BOTH TEACHERS IN THIS CLASSROOM**

## Co-Teaching Model

- ▶ Team teaching
- ▶ One-teach one-assist
- ▶ Station teaching
- ▶ Alternative teaching
- ▶ Parallel Teaching
- ▶ One teach one observe





## Remember...

- ▶ Co-teaching is not simply dividing tasks and responsibilities between two people
- ▶ Mind-set of sharing
- ▶ Co-teacher should constantly be thinking... **We are both teachers in this classroom!**

## Appendix J

### Coaching Meeting Agendas

#### Session 1: Setting a Foundation

Topic	Activity	Structure	Time
Building Rapport	Window and Mirror	Think and share	3 minutes
Norms	Teacher preference survey	Complete individually then together	12 minutes
Past Experiences	Both teachers share their experiences co-teaching and expertise	Round robin	5 minutes
Reflection	Researcher asks questions	Full group discussion	10 minutes

#### Session 2: Models

Topic	Activity	Structure	Time
Building Rapport	Education Metaphors	Think, create, and share	3 minutes
Co-Teaching Models	The research will ask each teacher to draw a visual representation of two co-teaching models.	Share and explain	5 minutes
Review and connect	The teachers will watch a video with examples of each model. The teachers will then connect to upcoming lessons.	Video and discussion	12 minutes
Reflection	Researcher asks questions	Full group discussion	10 minutes

#### Session 3:

Topic	Activity	Structure	Time
Building Rapport	Equity perspectives	Full group discussion	3 minutes
Conflict Resolution	The researcher will share strategies and the teachers will individually make connections	Full group discussion	5 minutes
Self-Assessment	Teachers will write a response to the following prompt: How do I influence student learning?	Write and reflect	7 minutes
Reflection	Researcher asks questions	Full group discussion	15 minutes

#### Session 4: Conflict Resolution

Topic	Activity	Structure	Time
Grounding	The Best Ever	Think and Share	3 minutes
Lesson Planning and Setting Goals	Teacher's create a timeline for the upcoming unit and plan a lesson together	Determined by teacher's current practices, the researcher will provide a structure for the co-teachers	17 minutes
Reflection	Researcher ask questions	Full group discussion	10 minutes

#### Session 5: Assessment

Topic	Activity	Structure	Time
Co-Assessing	Teachers will co-assess an assignment. Researcher will help facilitate discussion and strategies to organize data	Teacher led	10 minutes
Grouping and planning	Researcher will help the teachers make decisions based on the assessment for future lessons.	Data dialogue	10 minutes
Reflection	Researcher asks questions	Full group discussion	10 minutes

Session 6:

Topic	Activity	Structure	Time
Planning	Both teachers share an activity that they would like to try in an upcoming unit. The researcher will help facilitate this conversation and help the co-teacher determine what co-teaching model fits best.	planning	15 minutes
Reflection	Researcher asks questions	Full group discussion	15 minutes

## Appendix K

### Reflection Structure

Researcher: We are now going to take some time to reflect on the past weeks.

#### Overview of the Past Weeks

- How do you think your class has gone over the past two weeks?
  - Why do you think this happen?
  - What was your role in this?
  - What do you think you might keep the same or change in the future?

#### Connection to Coaching Session

- How do you think you will apply what we discussed today?
- How will \_\_\_\_\_ influence ELLs with disabilities?

## Appendix L

### **The Critical Incident Reflection Protocol Form**

Adapted from the “Critical Incident Reflection Form” by Calandra, B., Brantley-Dias, L., Lee, J., & Fox, D., 2009, *Using video editing to cultivate novice teachers’ practice*. Copyright 2009 by International Society for Technology in Education.

#### **Explanation of Critical Incidents and Purpose:**

- What are critical incidents?

Critical incidents are the “oops,” “ouch,” “aha...,” or “oh...” moments that you experience during a teaching episode or as you watch your videotaped lesson. The incident may be something that “amused” or “annoyed,” was “typical” or “atypical,” or a “felt difficulty” or “felt success.”

- Why use critical incidents?

One goal of using critical incidents is to help you look beyond the experience of the incident to the meaning of the incident. This is a form of reflection-on-action. Another goal is to help you develop your ability to reflect on these incidents as they happen, or reflection-in-action. Finally, using critical incidents can help you adjust your lesson and strategies for future teaching cycles, or reflection-for-action.

- How do I reflect on the critical incidents that I select?

There is no “right” or “wrong” way to select an incident. It should be something useful and meaningful to you. After watching your videotaped lesson for critical incidents, use the statements and questions below to guide you as you reflect about the critical incident you selected.

#### **Guiding Questions**



1. **What:** Provide an in-depth description of the event. Try to write this without judgment or interpretation.
2. **Emotions:** Describe the feelings you had as you “experienced” the incident.
3. **Why:** Explain the incident from the perspective of each participant (student, teacher, etc.). Use “I” for each participant’s explanation.
4. **Cultural Relevance:** In what ways did you employ culturally relevant teaching (for example, communicating high expectations for all students; using cultural referents for imparting knowledge, skills, and attitudes; creating a learning environment that honors and promotes cultural diversity; helping students challenge the status quo)? You might begin with, “As an educator, I was/was not able to...”
5. **Position:** What are some of your personal beliefs related to teaching and learning that you identified when reflecting on this incident and the portfolio standards that you addressed. You might begin with “As an educator, I believe/value...”
6. **Actions:** After considering this incident, what will you do differently in the next lesson in light of your new understandings? You might begin with, “As an educator, I will...”

## Appendix M

### Teacher Preference Survey



## Co-Teaching Self-Assessment Double the Teachers, Double the Fun!



### Classroom Policies and Procedures

*Some items to consider: When to go to the restroom/water, pencil sharpening/tissues, cell phones, asking for help/answering questions, turning in assignments*

**I hope that...**

**In our classroom we...**

### Teaching Preferences

*Some items to consider: What's an acceptable noise level (group work vs. independent work), transition strategies, small group opportunities, sharing of planning, preparation, instruction, assessment, and feedback*

**I hope that...**

**In our classroom we...**

### Behavior Management

*Some items to consider: Positive reinforcement strategies (individual vs. class-wide), discipline procedures, how to handle vocal/passive refusers/off-task behavior, who/when do you call for outside support*

**I hope that...**

**In our classroom we...**

**Grading – Many of these items will be discussed in your CLT, but please take some time to review specifics with one another**

*Some items to consider: How often do you assign homework, timelines for getting work back to students, sharing grading responsibilities, who grades what*

**I hope that...**

**In our classroom we...**

**Communication**

*Some items to consider: Emails and other written communication, who calls home, how often do you communicate home, how do YOU like to receive feedback?*

**I hope that...**

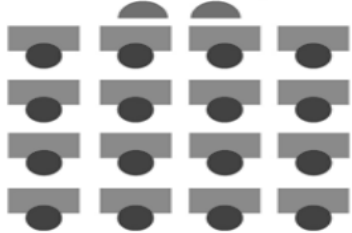
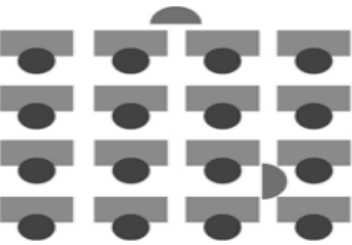
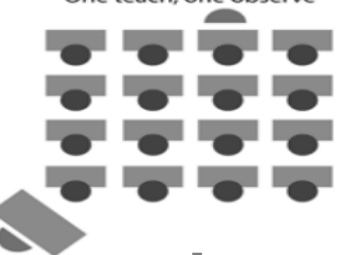
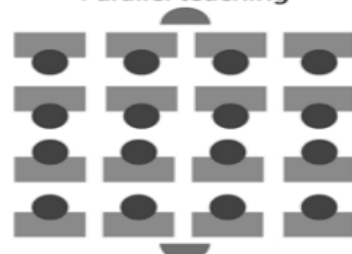
**In our classroom we...**

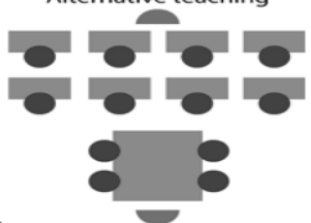
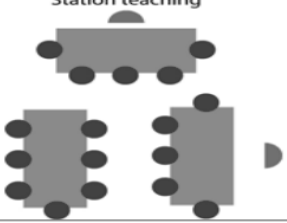
**Other wishes, expectations, concerns:**

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## Appendix N

### Co-Teaching Models Handout

Model	Graphic	Definition	Strengths and Weaknesses	Connections to Your Content and Instructional Model
Team Teaching	<p style="text-align: center;">Team teaching</p> 	Both teachers are actively providing instruction		
One Teach, One Assist/Drift	<p style="text-align: center;">One teach, one drift</p> 	One teacher provides instruction while the other assists		
One Teach, One Observe	<p style="text-align: center;">One teach, one observe</p> 	One teaches and one observes/collects data		
Parallel Teaching	<p style="text-align: center;">Parallel teaching</p> 	Teachers split the class and teach the same lesson to a smaller group		

Alternative Teaching	<p>Alternative teaching</p> 	One teaches a large group and other teacher pulls small group		
Station Teaching	<p>Station teaching</p> 	Each teaches a different lesson to small groups		

## Appendix O

### Susan's "Are We Really Co-Teaching" Responses

Question	4/6/2017	4/24/2017	5/1/2017	5/22/2017	5/31/2017	6/12/2017
We decide which co-teaching model we are going to use in a lesson based on the benefits to the students and the co-teachers.	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We share ideas, information, and materials.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We identify the resources and talents of the co-teachers.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We teach different groups of students at the same time.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We are aware of what our co-teacher(s) is doing even when we are not directly in one another's presence.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We share responsibility for deciding what to teach.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We agree on the curriculum standards that will be addressed in a lesson.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We share responsibility for deciding how to teach.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

We share responsibility for deciding who teaches which part of a lesson.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We are flexible and make changes as needed during a lesson.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We identify student strengths & needs.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We share responsibility for differentiating instruction.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We include other people when their expertise or experience is needed.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We share responsibility for how student learning is assessed.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We can show that students are learning when we co-teach.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We agree on discipline procedures & carry them out jointly.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We give feedback to one another on what goes on in the classroom.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We make improvements in our lessons based on what happens in the classroom.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

We communicate our concerns freely.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We have a process for resolving our disagreements and use it when faced with problems and conflicts.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We celebrate the process of co-teaching and the outcomes and successes.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We have regularly scheduled times to meet and discuss our work.	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
We use our meeting time productively.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We model collaboration and teamwork for our students.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We are both viewed by our students as their teacher.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We depend on one another to follow through on tasks and responsibilities.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We can use a variety of co-teaching approaches (e.g., parallel, team teaching, etc.)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



## Appendix P

### Janelle's "Are We Really Co-Teaching" Responses

Question	4/6/2017	4/24/2017	5/1/2017	5/22/2017	5/31/2017	6/12/2017
We decide which co-teaching model we are going to use in a lesson based on the benefits to the students and the co-teachers.	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We share ideas, information, and materials.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We identify the resources and talents of the co-teachers.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We teach different groups of students at the same time.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We are aware of what our co-teacher(s) is doing even when we are not directly in one another's presence.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We share responsibility for deciding what to teach.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We agree on the curriculum standards that will be addressed in a lesson.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We share responsibility for deciding how to teach.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We share responsibility for deciding who teaches which part of a lesson.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We are flexible and make changes as needed during a lesson.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We identify student strengths & needs.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We share responsibility for differentiating instruction.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

We include other people when their expertise or experience is needed.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We share responsibility for how student learning is assessed.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We can show that students are learning when we co-teach.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We agree on discipline procedures & carry them out jointly.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We give feedback to one another on what goes on in the classroom.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We make improvements in our lessons based on what happens in the classroom.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We communicate our concerns freely.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We have a process for resolving our disagreements and use it when faced with problems and conflicts.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We celebrate the process of co-teaching and the outcomes and successes.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We have regularly scheduled times to meet and discuss our work.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We use our meeting time productively.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We model collaboration and teamwork for our students.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We are both viewed by our students as their teacher.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
We depend on one another to follow through on tasks and responsibilities.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

We can use a variety of co-teaching approaches (e.g., parallel, team teaching, etc.).

Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
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## Biography

Jennifer graduated from the College of William and Mary in 2010 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. She majored in elementary education and philosophy. In 2011, Jennifer earned a Master of Education in special education from the College of William and Mary. After graduation, she began working in Fairfax County where she was a seventh-grade special education English teacher. Jennifer was a secondary special education teacher for five years, during which she taught a variety of subjects. In 2014, Jennifer enrolled at Johns Hopkins University to pursue a Doctorate of Education. During the 2015-2016 school year, she became an assessment coach in Fairfax County. Jennifer graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 2017 and continues her work as an assessment coach by supporting the planning, instruction, and assessment of middle school teachers. Jennifer also organizes all of the high-stakes, standardized testing within the school and supports teachers with the implementation and analysis of district- and school-based assessments.